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ABSTRACT

This document contains 43 papers on many aspects of adult literacy: "Literacy, Human Rights and Equality of Opportunity" (Einfeld); "Overcoming Illiteracy" (Marquet); "The Literacy Issue" (Crocker); "Literacy and Civil Liberties" (O'Gorman); "Designing a Tutor Training Program for Tutors of ESL" (Bowyer); "Catch the Spirit" (Stephens); "Reading, Writing, and Problem Solving" (Thiering); "Making the Band Aids Stick" (Bentley); "Two Minutes from Experiences of Literacy Campaign in Thailand" (Kaewsaiha); "Beghilos and the Pig Problem" (Hawke); "Issues in Adult Literacy" (Kindler); "Training Tutors for Adult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Literacy/Numeracy Students" (Lewis); "Alice and the Magic Mushroom or an Adult Literacy Organiser in Townsville" (Barclay); "Overcoming Disabilities" (Hoskisson, Eden); "Positive Factors of Participation for Women in Prison Literacy Programs" (Cassidy, Sim); "The Effect of Language Analysis on Teaching in Adult Literacy" (Evans); "Adult Basic Education--Its Role in the Reeducation of Brain Injured People" (Curtis); "Teaching Reading in Adult Basic Education Content Areas" (Johnson); "Literacy Programs for Deaf Adults" (Boardman); "Recognising, Responding, Remedying--The Three 'Rs' Library and Information Services" (Moon); "The Advantages of the Computer in Teaching Adult Literacy" (Howie); "Potential Unexploited: Public Libraries and Adult Literacy" (Cram); "Innovative Methods Equal Successful Results" (Brozie); "Training Tutors" (Dundas, Strong); "What Can I Read?" (Treloar); "The Use of an Informal Preliminary Interview in Developing Individual Literacy Programs for Adults with Disabilities" (Watson); "Writing Is for Everyone" (Treloar); "Barriers to Participation in Prison Literacy Programmes" (Black); "Literacy Funding" (Haughton, Hurley); "Hello? Hello? Hello? Using Interactive Communication Technologies to Improve Literacy" (Lundin); "Students in Access Classes" (Cornish); "They Can Read--Try Another Way" (Rock, Whales, Russell); "Managing the Comprehension Gap with Health Instructions" (Doak, Doak); "Literacy and Numeracy Provision for Mildly Intellectually Disabled Adults" (Learmont); "Interactive Reading" (Strempel); "'Hey, Miss, I Can't Read These Notes'" (Greenland); "Accelerative Learning" (Strempel); "The Language of Mathematics" (Tout); "Curriculum Processes for Adult Migrant Literacy Materials" (Burton); "Doing Case Study Research" (Grant, Treloar); "Will National Core Curriculum Courses Produce Apprentices Who Cannot Read?" (Hope); "Libraries and Literacy" (Reid); and "Communication Skills for Hearing Impaired Young Adults" (Calver). (KC)

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AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL
FOR
ADULT LITERACY

LITERACY FOR LIVING

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CONFERENCE PAPERS
OF THE
12TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

BRISBANE 1988

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FOREWORD

The 1988 A.C.A.L. Conference for me was one of the most exciting national conferences I have attended. I am pleased to write a foreword to the conference papers, which offer a lasting documentation of some aspects of the conference life.

The first day of the conference presented dramatically many of the issues current in the adult literacy field: the potential contribution adult literacy provision can make to our nation's social justice and economic strategies, the voice of adult students and the role of community groups along with government. Conference met as the first year of the Adult Literacy Action Campaign under the National Policy on Languages was getting underway.

A wide cross-section of the community participated in the conference: paid workers and volunteers, aborigines, librarians, workers with disabled people, and government officials. Speakers came from the areas of human rights, the law, health, technology and the Futures Commission. Overseas participants spoke of coalitions for adult literacy in North America and national campaigns in Asia.

Let me record the thanks of the Australian Council for Adult Literacy for the enormous work of the Queensland organizers in putting on Conference '88.

Noel Simpson,
President.

LITERACY FOR LIVING

A conference is judged by the presentations given by speakers. These are dependent upon the speakers themselves.

The Queensland Council for Adult Literacy has been very fortunate in our Bicentennial year to have been able to host such a variety of competent speakers. These dedicated people demonstrated their expertise and willingness to share knowledge of their particular facets of Adult Literacy. The papers which appear in print have been generously given to us. Each one represents the expression of hard work, energy and talent contributed by participants coming from many different disciplines.

The concern for adults who wish to become more literate, is the thread which brought together speakers from all parts of Australia and from other countries. For those of you who were part of the Conference, these papers will remind you of the sessions you were fortunate enough to attend. The information from sessions you could not manage to hear, will, perhaps, whet your appetite.

Some readers requested papers because they were unable to attend the Conference. We hope this collection of papers gives you a broad understanding of how important Literacy is for Living.

Julia Zimmerman and Jenny Farmer
Conference Convenors

FROM THE EDITOR

This collection of Conference Papers provides a diverse range of articles on all aspects of Adult Literacy. It was decided not to arrange them in categories because many of them are relevant to several areas. The order is random, so one topic is not seen to be more important than another. The Subject/Author/Title Index will make access easy.

All Papers submitted have been included with minimal editing apart from corrections. It is very pleasing that so many speakers did put the effort into preparing their talks for publication. Some workshop presenters felt that their interactive sessions were not suited to a formal written presentation.

It was not possible to include the outcomes of the "Where to From Here?" session which was held on the last day. These will be made available through the A.C.A.L. executive.

TAPES are available of:

Session 1 -	Opening speeches (including Justice Einfeld)
Session 2 -	Dialogue between a Community Adult Literacy lobbyist (with some friends incl. Dr Ian Lowe) and a benevolent adult education bureaucrat (with a small pie).
Session 4 -	Eunice Askov and Annabel Newman
Session 9 -	Literacy and Technology (Workplace seminar)
Cost:	$5.00 each

Marian Norton

OPENING SESSION

WELCOME

Brenda Bennion

I started at Bald Hills TAFE as a non reader or writer in 1983. I feel the biggest step I ever took was having an interview to get help to read and write. The interview was O.K. I guess. I was told they would send me a letter to let me know which class I would be in. A few days later I received it. It seemed funny because I couldn't read it and I had to ask a friend what it said.

I went to every maths and English class which went for 2 hours a lesson. They were really great. Each week I felt like I learnt something, but it doesn't stop with the 2 hours per class as I found that doing my homework was better and I was able to keep up with the others.

Adult Literacy is very important to me. Without the excellent teachers and tutors I wouldn't be here today. Not only did I learn to read and write but it also gave me confidence to meet new people, apply for different jobs, and become more outgoing. I am presently working as a part time tutor with Sandgate Community Youth Support Scheme and Focus on Youth. I have recently had a booklet published called, "ABC, 123 for CYSS". I would like to say to all students "Make a decision every six weeks to achieve a goal, and make another. If you want something badly enough you will get it. The sky's the limit."

On behalf of all the students of Adult Literacy, we thank you, one and all, for your valuable time. Have a great Conference.

Sister Rita Riley
Tutor

On behalf of all tutors it gives me great pleasure to welcome everyone to this Conference. As a volunteer tutor of limited experience and a present student at Mt Gravatt College it is a particular privilege for me to be welcoming so many people of wider experience and expertise in this vital area.

We are all here because we believe in the importance and the value of what this Conference is about – 'Literacy for Living'. This title is eminently appropriate because it highlights what is surely essential to our endeavours. I welcome the opportunity this Conference affords for further reflection and critical debate of the issues involved in the concept behind this title. The broad program that is offered gives ample scope to tutors such as me, to benefit from and share insights with others over a wide range of literacy issues. As I pursue my studies in my work as a tutor, I realise more and more the immense limitations that the lack of literacy can cause over people's entire lives, and how important literacy skills are, not only for daily practical living, but also for the growth of self esteem, confidence and interpersonal relationships.

It is therefore with genuine anticipation that I look forward to these days as a time for widening visions, for clarifying objectives so that the learning experience which I and other tutors offer are in fact promoting life skills and personal development. If the focus of this Conference is on personal growth and development so that life can be more fully appreciated and enjoyed, what better setting could be chosen than the city of Brisbane which at present is simply brimming with life and vitality for those who are capable of taking advantage of all that is offered? So it is with great pleasure that I welcome all visitors to Brisbane and everyone to this 12th National Literacy Conference.

Noel Simpson
President, Australian Council for Adult Literacy

I would like to welcome you on behalf of the Australian Council for Adult Literacy. Our National Conference each year is a special occasion for us. It is a time when we can all come together from across the

country, whether we are students or tutors or organisers, or simply people who pport the Adult Literacy movement. ou have already heard from some key people this morning who are part of the adult literacy movement and this is its essential nature. It is a partnership between different groups of people within the community and all of those different groups in the community are essential for its success. Our National Conference is a time when we can remember why we are all here and why we are involved.

What we are 'on about', is helping each other develop as people. In particular, in this case, is focusing on our reading, writing and maths development, but what we must not lose sight of is that basically what we are all on about, is developing as people and helping each other do that. As the theme for this Conference says, we are concerned with 'Literacy for Living'.

I would like to thank Queenslanders for organising this Conference. Certainly, people from other states who are here and have been involved in organising other conferences know just how much work is involved in getting together a National Conference.

This year is special for us in the Australian Council for Adult Literacy. In the two days preceding this Conference some of us have been involved in a UNESCO workshop here in Brisbane where we have been meeting with people from the Asian Pacific area. We have been starting to share experiences with them about our work in Adult Literacy and that has been a first for us. I think it is very important that people who are involved in Adult Literacy in Australia are starting to become more involved with people in other countries who are working in the same field.

This Conference is also special because it is followed by the International Reading Association Conference which is being held on the Gold Coast. I believe a number of people from this Conference will participate in that Conference. Partly because of the timing of the two conferences being together it means at this particular Conference we are going to be able to hear speakers from other countries who have basically come here for the International Conference but were lucky to be asked to be speakers for this Conference as well.

I think the 1988 National Conference is also special because our Bicentennial year gives us the chance to focus on the adult literacy needs of Aboriginal people who were displaced in this country 200 years ago. Certainly from my own point of view, one of the best things, if not the best thing, of the bicentennial year is the opportunity for Aboriginal people to tell us what their needs are in terms of living and education in Australia in 1988.

It is only really now that the adult literacy movement in Australia is starting to be taken seriously by Government. People writing the history of the Adult Literacy movement in Australia, which is a fairly recent history perhaps, will look back on events that happened in 1986 and 1987 as a turning point. It was about half way through 1986 that our National Treasurer made a speech about the possibility of Australia becoming a banana republic. From that point onwards, Australia became much more concerned about the need to restructure its economy; the need for people to change jobs in the workforce; the need for a more flexible and trained workforce; the need to move away from some of our traditional industries to economic activity, became apparent.

Once that realization came, certainly those of us involved in the adult literacy movement, have been keen to point out to government, it is not possible to have successful retraining programs for a number of people in the workforce unless you first of all provide them with the opportunity to develop their adult literacy and basic education. The courses are simply irrelevant. They won't work for a significant percentage of the adult population. It is not the whole group. It is not all that frightening a prospect. We don't ask for all that much money compared to money that is spent in other

areas. What we have been starting to say to governments is that it is essential that governments develop a sound base of adult literacy and basic education provision across Australia if this country is going to meet the sorts of objectives it needs to meet for its ongoing economic development.

We have been advancing the argument, too, that the right to adult literacy is essentially a social justice right. Its humanitarian basis we believe just as strongly as ever. What we are now saying is that adult literacy provision is just as necessary both in terms of social justice and in terms of economic development.

That concern is starting to bear fruit in 1988. For the first time we have a National Policy on Languages in this country and adult literacy is one of six programs that is being funded under the National Policy on Languages. At this stage the adult literacy action campaign being funded is only a two year program which is due to finish at the end of 1989. Now those of us involved in the area, know that all the work is not going to be done by the end of 1989. We were very pleased to hear a few months ago that the United Nations has declared 1990 to be International Literacy Year so I think 1990 provides the opportunity for governments in Australia, both the Commonwealth Governments and the State Governments, to become serious about tackling the ongoing adult literacy needs in the Australian population. Perhaps it is timely for us, as when the two year program under the National Policy on Languages draws to a close, 1990 will just be beginning.

As these developments occur, so do the demands upon the Australian Council for Adult Literacy. The Australian Council for Adult Literacy offers the only real national co-ordination that is currently going on in the Adult Literacy field.

One of the advantages for the Council is that it is free to speak its own mind. We do not have to behave as public servants although some of us might be public servants in our normal paid jobs. When we speak as members of the Council we are quite independent and we can speak freely. The Council has a very important role, just as the State and Territory Councils do, to stand up for important human values in adult literacy work and to be advocates for putting those values into practice. The work of the Council in that respect is going to become more and more important. I offer best wishes to everyone here for a successful and worthwhile Conference.

Address by Barry Read
Chief Executive
Department of Employment, Vocational Education and Training

Thank you for your invitation to address the 12th National Conference of the Australian Council for Adult Literacy.

I want to give a special thanks to Julia Zimmerman and Christine Scott for the provision of background notes to assist me in addressing you today.

After hearing Brenda Bennion speak I feel there is little I can say to focus on the theme for the Conference over the next few days. Brenda really highlighted what Literacy for Living is all about. I am sure if someone had suggested to her in 1983 that she might address your Conference today she would have considered that there was much more opportunity for her to fly to the moon.

I know that many of you will be aware of the points I will raise because of the wide cross-section of ACAL membership, who include for example students, volunteer tutors, adult literacy teachers and organisers, teachers in TAFE, librarians and community groups right throughout Australia.

I am pleased that ACAL is aware of the need to form a peak advisory body to the government in the area of Adult Literacy and I hope this will foster the bringing together of other bodies with a similar aim to ACAL to give a united voice to government. In fact I recently met with another group which has a peak body

focus.

Governments can never do enough to assist areas such as Adult Literacy and my Department through TAFE is pleased to be able to offer our support and in turn play our role in preparation for this 12th National Conference of ACAL.

ACAL's standing is certainly enhanced by its association with UNESCO. This has already involved ACAL in a research project and, immediately before this Seminar, a two day Seminar for literacy workers from the Asia/Pacific Region was held.

The international recognition of ACAL will likely result in Australian literacy workers being invited to Asia/Pacific countries to assist in the development of literacy programs and will give international recognition to adult literacy work in Australia.

This international recognition of ACAL will not neglect Australia but will allow our contribution overseas particularly in our region.

There are many points that governments can learn in relation to literacy and I am conscious of the difficulty many people have with the name of my Department. Many problems in fact are not the fault of governments but are the result of bureaucratic procedures.

My desire and that of my senior officers is to allow our program managers more discretion in delivery of programs and to continually question what is best for their client group. The client is the focus right throughout the department. Without the client there is no job for any of us to do. The theme for your Conference is particularly appropriate at the moment. Last week I was in the Torres Strait and it was drawn to my attention how great was the quest for wider knowledge in education throughout the Islands.

We must address our literacy levels if we are to maintain our present standard of living in the continuously changing industrial economy. The world's most successful economies have typically given high priority to basic education and to the skills which determine competence at work. ABS figures indicate that 23% of our population aged 15 and over left school at that age or before. Many students who have left school at 15 years of age or before are considered to have less than adequate literacy skills to participate fully in contemporary society. Research carried out in my own Department into the literacy and numeracy levels of the students entering into full-time TAFE courses indicates that many students have difficulty with reading and writing and numerical tasks associated with their courses and at their work places.

In my own case I am particularly conscious of my own level of computer literacy.

To ignore a large segment of an unemployed population as being too difficult to help is to underutilise a large proportion of our national resources. What is happening in our society is that the literacy demands are increasing. Our society is becoming increasingly complex and with technological change and the change in patterns of employment the levels of literacy required in our community are higher than ever before.

Twenty years ago to read a newspaper you needed a reading age of 8 or 9. Today you need a reading age of 14. With increasingly complex technology, technical journals, trade manuals and written work procedures, literacy demands have increased.

A recent Queensland Confederation of Industry survey showed that proficiency in reading and writing and maths were in the top 4 criteria when employers were selecting school leavers for jobs. Over recent years the number of unskilled jobs has decreased markedly and the new areas of employment are in the service industries. Where high levels of literacy and numeracy are required, many adults are finding they need to be retrained and that they need a high level of literacy to cope with their training courses.

For many people in programs with which the Department is involved, the goal of literacy is a dream of becoming someone – someone who is independent, and feeling as if they are in control of their lives.

In adult literacy programs around Australia thousands of members of the community freely volunteer their time and energy to help adults to improve their reading and writing and numeracy skills. In Queensland alone more than 600 people are voluntary tutors and I want to pay great tribute to this work. This is evidence that the community believes strongly that literacy is important for living.

The nature of work in Australia is changing. As new jobs are created and old jobs disappear, new levels and types of basic skills for employment are created. Most newly created jobs call for reading and writing skills considerably above previous basic levels. More than ever before, adults are actively seeking education and re-training.

At the same time the role of education is changing, increasingly education is being seen as life-long learning throughout adulthood. This has resulted partly from the growth of unemployment and partly from the increased literacy demands of an information society based on new technology. Investment in skills has become a major issue in the United State of America and Japan where post school education and training are increasingly regarded as an investment in staff, and an investment in service and productivity.

The UNESCO 1964 definition of literacy was – "A person is literate when he has acquired the essential knowledge and skills which enable him to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning in his group and community, and whose attainment in reading, writing and arithmetic make it possible for him to continue to use these skills towards his own and the community's development."

To be productively literate, a person requires a variety of skills. These skills range from the ability to recognise single letters through to being able to achieve higher order competence in communication. The acquisition of these skills may be hurried or hindered by a variety of factors. Motivation, maturity, physical, sensory and emotional problems can affect the acquisition of productive literacy.

However productive literacy for all of our labour force and indeed our whole population is what we should aim for.

My Department has a commitment to improve opportunities for access to vocational education and training for people who, for what ever reason, are educationally disadvantaged. We recognise the sensitive nature of adult literacy provision and are committed to providing a range of opportunities both in the community and in TAFE colleges to meet individual needs.

We acknowledge the valuable contribution that the community makes in this State towards providing adult literacy programs and we are committed to providing professional support to community groups whenever possible.

This Conference provides you with the perfect opportunity to look at the issues surrounding literacy, to exchange information and knowledge and perhaps place yourselves in a better position to contribute to raising the literacy skills of our greatest national resource. I am pleased to see that so many people have availed themselves of this opportunity.

I look forward to receiving the recommendations and report of this Conference and I wish you all well over the next four days.

Jean Searle
President, Queensland Council for Adult Literacy

On behalf of the Queensland Council for Adult Literacy, I should like to reiterate the welcome you have received to the 12th National Conference of the Australian

Council for Adult Literacy. I hope you will all find this Conference informative, interesting and, above all, challenging.

I should like to start by briefly outlining the rationale for the Conference and then highlight some aspects.

About two years ago, the executive of QCAL realised that the 1988 ACAL Conference would be held in Brisbane. I can remember Jenny Farmer saying "Do you realise that Expo will be on in Brisbane then?" At that time not much was known about Expo although some optimists believed there could be a few more tourists in Brisbane! We were also informed that the International Reading Association was planning to hold their World Reading Congress in Brisbane in July 1988.

These two events greatly influenced the format for the 12th National Conference. Firstly, the fact that Expo and the IRA Congress were occurring simultaneously meant that there could be a shortage of accommodation in Brisbane for hotel and convention rooms – even though the IRA subsequently moved the Congress to the Gold Coast. So two years ago we booked this campus of BCAE.

Secondly, in co-operation with the Brisbane representatives of the ARA we were able to liaise with some of the overseas speakers who had expressed an interest in adult literacy and were willing to speak at both conferences. We are delighted at the number of distinguished speakers who accepted our invitation to share their expertise.

We are also fortunate that UNESCO chose to hold the Asian Pacific Regional Workshop at Mt Gravatt to co-incide with this conference and we welcome the delegates from Thailand. We look forward to exchanging information and views with them.

All this has meant that this Conference will have a slightly different 'flavour' from previous ones. Due to its nature, we decided to hold a separate student conference and we invited all other states and territories to do likewise and to include a session on issues, the results of which are to be raised during this Conference.

Our Student Conference was held on 18th June. More than 150 students, tutors and teachers attended. Participants travelled from as far away as Ararat and Ballarat in Victoria and from Adelaide, Murwillumbah, Beaudesert, the Gold and Sunshine Coasts, Ipswich and South Burdekin, as well as from Metropolitan programs.

The Student Conference proved to be a great success with students choosing from a range of activities as varied as making a newspaper, reading with children, reading and writing poetry, making a video, and developing self-esteem. Photographs from the conference, student writing and the newspapers will be displayed during this Conference and taped interviews with some of the students will be broadcast.

The theme chosen for the 12th National Conference of the Australian Council for Adult Literacy is "LITERACY FOR LIVING". Thus the program places emphasis on all aspects of adult living: adults as parents, as workers, as consumers and as community members.

The interest areas that will be covered are:

- Vocational literacy
- Prison literacy
- Migrant literacy
- Libraries and literacy
- Aboriginal and Islander literacy
- Literacy and people with disabilities
- Computers and literacy
- Distance literacy
- Tutors and tutor organisers
- Research
- Numeracy

Each area will consider current issues,

appropriate resources, teaching strategies and content.

Some of the Conference highlights, following the opening by Justice Einfeld, will be:

- Address this afternoon by Dr Ian Lowe of the Futures Commission
- Plenary session on Sunday: "Politics and Literacy"
- Two major seminars on Monday: "Workplace Literacy"

  "Literacy and Health Care"
- A demonstration of teleconferencing to assist distance learning.

Other highlights will be:

- Discussion about planning for 1990 – International year of Literacy
- Performance by the Junction Theatre Company of the play "Just Write"
- Closing address by Hon. Vince Lester, Minister for Employment, Vocational Education and Training.

Some participants may find that the 'Happy Hours' provide additional highlights!

We are confident that this Conference will result in many issues being discussed and that action plans will be formulated which will raise the profile of adult literacy and provide for new initiatives in literacy at the State, National and International levels.

On behalf of the Queensland Council for Adult Literacy I hope you all enjoy this Conference; that each of you is stimulated and challenged; that you make and renew friendships; and that you participate in as many sessions as possible. Thank you for coming.

LITERACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

THE HON. JUSTICE MARCUS EINFELD

I am honoured to have the opportunity to address this Conference today. The Australian Council for Adult Literacy, only twelve years old as it is, has been a driving force and a rallying point for those concerned with a problem which constitutes a national disgrace.

Adult illiteracy, long recognized as endemic in the third world, has only recently been acknowledged to exist in Australia and other western countries. Like most statistics from the third world, those in relation to adult literacy are horrifying. The rate of illiteracy in Nepal is 70%; in Pakistan, 78%; in Afghanistan, 80% and in Upper Volta, 90%. (1).

The problem is being fought bravely by UNESCO with programs such as Literacy 2000, which will hopefully receive some impetus in 1990, the International Year of Literacy. The right to education is also included in several international instruments. Article 13(1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (2) provides:

> The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education. They agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

Australia has ratified this Convention. We have thereby solemnly undertaken to the world and to ourselves that we will implement its obligations. We have thus far quite failed to do so.

The Declaration of the Right to Learn, (3) passed at the Fourth Unesco International Conference on Adult Education in Paris in 1985, provides in part:

> development; it must be recognized as one of the fundamental rights. The act of learning, lying as it does at the heart of all educational activity, changes human beings from objects at the mercy of events to subjects who create their own history.

Today, of course, we are concerned with literacy in the west and particularly Australia. As free and compulsory education has been a feature of our society for more than a century, (Tasmania, the first Colony of the British Empire to do so, made school attendance compulsory in 1869) (4), the view is widely held that there is no such thing as illiteracy. Indeed, until very recently that was precisely the stated view of government. (5).

Whilst available statistical information is sketchy, a definite pattern does emerge. Indications are, for example, that in the US about 5% of the population is totally illiterate, and a further 17% functionally illiterate. A 1980 Canadian study suggested that 1 million adult Canadians cannot read or write, and a further 4 million have serious problems. (6).

Available information suggests that the situation in Australia is no better. Dymock has estimated, on the basis of Dr Goyen's 1976 study in Sydney, that about 400,000 adult native English speakers are functionally illiterate, and a further 600,000 migrants from non-English speaking countries (7). For the benefit of the innumerate amongst us, that is a total of 1 million illiterate adult Australians. Evidence given in 1984 to the Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts showed that more than 40% of adult Australians have difficulty in reading or writing English. (8).

Literacy is a relative concept and therefore does not easily admit of definition. The level of competency which might be regarded as constituting 'functional'

literacy – that is the ability to function – must rise with the increasing demands of the technological age. The 1958 Unesco General Conference recommended the following definition of literacy:

> A person is illiterate who cannot with understanding both read and write a short, simple statement on his everyday life. (9).

The 1978 General Conference added:

> A person is functionally illiterate who cannot engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his group and community and also for enabling him to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his own and the community's development. (10).

Perhaps a useful variation is the definition of a literate person used by the South Australian Department of Technical and Further Education:

> has reached a point where independent new learning via the written word is possible. (11).

That at least a million Australians can be said to be functionally illiterate is quite intolerable and unacceptable. Although there has been some response from government, it has been ad hoc, disjointed and insubstantial. Dymock reveals that there are several hundred adult literacy programs in Australia, mostly under the auspices of Colleges of Technical and Further Education, Departments of Education, Colleges of Advanced Education and communities, but the indications are that only about 6,000 people are assisted at any one time.(12). Even if the situation is somewhat better than that, we have still only just stratched the tip of the iceberg.

Successive reports, including the Senate Report, A National Language Policy,(13) and Joseph Lo Bianco's 1987 Report, (14) have recommended a concerted national response to the problem.

One is, of course, prompted to ask why is there such a problem when education has been compulsory for so long? The answer is complex, and includes such factors as unsympathetic or uncaring teachers, difficult childhood, scornful attitudes to reading and education and the like. It can be argued, however, that if the education system was functioning correctly the problem would be much less severe. The fact is that many of the young people that complete their compulsory education each year are illiterate or semi-literate. In evidence to the Senate Committee Mr A.J. Nelson, the then Chairman of the Australian Council for Adult Literacy, said:

> A survey [by the Australian Council for Education Research] some five years ago ... suggests that among the 13,000 people sampled, one-sixth of the fourteen-year-olds were unable to read a simple sentence ... a further quarter of the fourteen-year-old people sampled only partly mastered reading skills. (15).

One might well be forgiven for suggesting that many children do well in spite of, rather than because of, their schooling. Mark Twain's famous comment comes to mind: "I never let my schooling interfere with my education".

There is no doubt that both parents and the education system bear the responsibility for illiteracy, but I am tempted to suggest that greater responsibility must be accepted and discharged by parents or guardians. I am convinced that nothing can be more beneficial for the intellectual development of children than a home where learning is encouraged and rewarded. It is almost trite to say that most important of all is the encouragement of reading.

One is reminded of the childhood experiences of D.H. Lawrence, whose father was an ignorant, bigoted and violent coal miner. Intolerant of values outside his own dimension, particularly books and learning, he placed every obstacle in the path of the sensitive and gifted young Lawrence. A description of that period of his life can be found, of course, in his novel **Sons and Lovers**. An equally compelling account of a similar childhood was written by James Joyce in **A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man**.

But whatever the operative factors may be,

a child's experiences in its formative years leave a legacy which is difficult to overcome in adulthood. The almost pathetic accounts of life behind the bars of illiteracy bear more than ample testament to this.

Talking about being behind bars. Many of you will recall the dispute over the 'Black Hole' cells at Boggo Road Gaol at the end of last year. I am happy to say that the problem was resolved, after the intervention of my Commission, by the sensible and decisive action of Premier Ahern. But at the time of this dispute we learned that the total sum available annually from the Queensland Budget for rehabilitation and retraining for the whole of the Queensland prison population was $23,000!

This is simply disgraceful and represents a complete abdication of public responsibility for the alleviation of the types of educational and literacy problems which feed the prison population in the first place. It virtually ensures recidivism, with the attendant immense public cost. The cost of keeping every prisoner in NSW is $32,000 per year. And 11,000 prisoners a year go through Long Bay alone! Just reflect on that comparison – millions of dollars a year on keeping prisoners, and $23,000 to help them avoid returning!

Illiterate people tend to suffer from terrible lack of self-esteem and self-worth. They live a life of fear and frustration, developing the most elaborate mechanisms to avoid detection. They often perform menial jobs, and their illiteracy precludes them from further training. Because of their problem they are often unaware of the availability of help, or are too ashamed to ask for it.

What does it mean to be literate, and what is the value of literacy? The capacity to read and write, to record and communicate with accuracy, is one of the capacities that defines the human being. It is one of the qualities of human-ness. Moreover, it is one of the indicia of a genuinely civilised society. Great literature, like great art or music, represents the highest expression of civilised man. Imagine never being able to listen to Mozart, view the paintings of Renoir or the sculpture of Michaelangelo – or never to read Plato, Shakespeare, Voltaire or Dante. What, indeed, would society be like without Donald Duck or Bugs Bunny!?

In addition to the thrill of experiencing such great minds, literature is an essential ingredient in the development of personality and character, for it is through literature that we find ourselves. This is more complex than the frustration felt by an illiterate person in a literate society. The declaration of the International Symposium for Literacy at Persepolis in 1975 put it thus:

> Literacy is not just the process of learning the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, but a contribution to the liberation of man and to his full development. (16).

Reading enables a person to understand the human condition and thereby to understand himself. All the complex motivations of man find expression in his literature – vanity, conceit, love, hate, ambition, compassion – are reflected in the written word. To understand self is, if you like, to become whole. As Socrates said, "The unexamined life is not worth living".

Of course, what the programs which concern those here today are designed to achieve is a more basic level of literacy which it is hoped will lead to greater things. The immediate concern of most adult literacy programs is to provide students with what one researcher has called 'survival literacy'. This is an apt phrase, because the problem for many people is simply to cope with the ordinary reading and writing requirements of everyday life: things like reading the recipe on a cake packet or the destination indicator at a railway station or filling in a job application form.

One of the courses for adult literacy tutors requires the participants to list all the things they read over the past 24 hours. That is a salutary exercise indeed, for only then can one have some comprehension of

what life would be like in the absence of the ability to read.

Literacy can also be seen as a medium for the equalisation of opportunity. As the acquisition of knowledge is the primary means of advancement in our world, literacy is an indispensable pre-requisite. All the knowledge and wisdom of the generations can be gleaned from books. We must make amends to those whom the system has failed, for whatever reason, to provide with that capacity. It is simply intolerable that so many Australians are denied the pleasure and fulfillment of learning and the benefits of all the marvellous institutions of higher education.

We should be aware that the alientation of non-literate people must be increasing with the exponential expansion of technological sophisitication. The information revolution – instantaneous communication across the globe, whole encyclopaedias in a tiny computer disc, on line access to whole libraries – all this must be enormously frustrating for those fundamentally precluded from it. They certainly destroy equality of access to a fair chance – another basic requirement for a free sophisticated society.

It must also be recognized that literacy is the primary means for the correction of power imbalances. Never in recorded history has the individual been so vulnerable to manipulation and control by the state, the corporation and the union. Exploitation of the weak and powerless has a long and ignoble lineage, but never has there been greater facility for it.

One of the best defences which the citizen has in our society is democracy. But here again the illiterate is severely disadvantaged. He is unable to follow the debates surrounding an issue, except at the superficial level of the audio and visual media. He cannot express his views in the form of a letter to the newspaper or to his local Member of Parliament. He cannot read the Government's proposals for reform, or its election manifesto, the How To Vote brochures at election time, or even the instructions on how to fill in the voting papers. So much for democracy.

Whilst it is true that the last few decades have witnessed the development of human rights protections at a national and international level, how can the individual invoke such protections if he is not even aware of their existence? The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission is aware of this problem, particularly amongst certain groups such as migrants from non-English speaking countries and Aborigines. The Commission's charter includes a broad educational function which we have invoked with a number of projects.

One such project is designed to provide one of the most vulnerable groups – immigrant women – with information about their rights, in a number of languages, including such things as the right not to be discriminated against in employment on the grounds of sex, race or pregnancy; the right not to be discriminated against in the provision of goods, services and accommodation; and the right not to be sexually harassed.

Joseph Lo Bianco has pointed out: "For a large minority of Australians, English is not the mother tongue." Furthermore, "For many Aborigines, English is effectively a foreign language." (17). The development of proficiency in English is particularly difficult for Aborigines in remote areas, where it is rarely encountered.

Lo Bianco is at pains to stress that proper acknowledgement is required of the shared responsibility for the availability of English as a Second Language classes by the State and Territory and Commonwealth Governments. He says:

> The Commonwealth's responsibility arises from its constitutional authority to recruit immigrants and its role as the primary body concerned with settlement. The Commonwealth is also constitutionally responsible for Aboriginal Affairs ...
>
> The States and Territories, through various educational authorities, both government and non-government, are primarily responsible for the administration and delivery of educational services and programs, curriculum planning,

support and administration. (18).

It is encumbent upon the Commonwealth to take a leading role in the development of ESL. Given that the problems of Aborigines, non-English speaking immigrants and native-born Australians are diverse and require programs differing in content and method, it is essential that proper co-ordination and funding be available. It is simply not acceptable for the Commonwealth to abdicate its responsibility in this respect.

We cannot escape the conclusion, however, that until literacy is accepted as a national priority, and such acceptance is accompanied by far greater resources than presently allocated, the problem can only become worse. I am delighted to hear of the progress already made and I support wholeheartedly the efforts of the organizations represented here today. In thanking you for your kind invitation to open and launch this Conference, I wish you all – and the rest of Australia which will profit from your deliberations – every success.

1. Dymock, D. **Adult Literacy Provision in Australia: Trends and Needs**, 1982, Australian Council for Adult Literacy. p.p. 12-13.
2. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Schedule II, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986. (Signed 18th Dec 1972, Ratified August 13, 1980).
3. UNESCO Declaration on the Right to Learn.
4. **Providing Education Services**, Tasmanian Department of Education Pamphlet, p.1.
5. Dymock, D. **op.cit.**, p.13
6. **Ibid.**
7. **Ibid.** p.18
8. Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts, **A National Language Policy**, AGPS, Canberra, 1984, p.67.
9. **Backgrounder: Literacy Education**, UNESCO Pamphlet, 1983, p.3.
10. **Ibid.**
11. Senate Report, **op.cit.**, p.65
12. **Ibid.**, p.67.
13. **Ibid.**, Recommendation 33, p.226.
14. Lo Bianco, J. **National Policy on Languages**, AGPS, Canberra, 1987, Recommendation 10, p.195.
15. Senate Report, **op.cit.**, p.66.
16. Backgrounder, **op.cit.**, p.9.
17. Lo Bianco, J. **op.cit.**, p.85.
18. **Ibid.**, p.87.

OVERCOMING ILLITERACY

MICHAEL MARQUET

School Days

I left school seven years ago, not able to read or write very much at all by myself. I had spent nine years of my schooling in a Special class and in that time, I learnt very little.

Being unable to read and write was like being a tree that is dormant in the winter months. That was one of my handicaps. The other was having a serious speech problem from the age of three.

While at school, I did have help and attended the Speech Clinic. When I left school, I had help from a private speech teacher.

It is not hard for me to recall the frustrations, the feelings of being thought "dumb" and the embarrassment when in front of people. I was unable to say some words properly. I was used to having people make fun of me. It was sheer hell ... I won't ever forget those past experiences.

While at school, I would often not admit to having a reading problem. I would say nothing. When I didn't understand some words in conversation, (because I didn't know the words), I would never ask someone to explain. I was always too scared. It took a long time for me to break that habit. It takes confidence to ask. It takes time to pick some things up, therefore I was always behind in reading levels. I never did catch up. The class had too many students. The teachers did not have enough time to spend with me. Slowly, I got further and further behind. Someone from the Education Department had come to see my parents about my school work. It was decided then, to put me in a Special class. There they would be able to help me catch up on the other children. I never did catch up. I felt at the time that I was a failure and had been pushed to the side.

I then went on to Aranui High School and completed two years there. I left school at the end of the fourth form aged 15 with no qualifications. The only real benefit to me in those past two years at school was the Work Experience program. It was an excellent scheme. I learnt a lot of things about people and their jobs. In the first year I worked in several different bakeries. At the end of the year, I worked in Noah's Hotel, the best place to get experience as a pastry cook and the best place to stay in Christchurch. In my last year at High school, I wanted to get some experience at the Botanic Gardens. I asked my teacher if that was possible. I became the first school student to have work experience at the Gardens. I worked there on Tuesdays for 6 months. At the end of that time, I had learned a whole lot of new things about myself and decided that this was the job for me and my career for the future. I left school, and was glad. I did not want to remember the past ten years, especially the "slinging off" and criticism I got from other kids for not reading and writing too well.

My Horticultural Apprenticeship

The next year, 1980, I got a job as a labourer/gardener at the Gardens. Once there, my eyes just opened up with all the plant names and new words I had never seen before. The botanical names just amazed me.

At the time the curator knew that I had a reading problem and had come from a special class. It made things very hard and very frustrating for five years. I wanted an apprenticeship in horticulture.

One morning Mum was at home listening to the radio. The program she heard was about International Literacy Day. The local co-ordinator was talking about the reading scheme here in Christchurch.

When I got home from work Mum told me what she had heard. I decided to get in

touch with the radio station to find out how to get in touch with the reading program talked about on radio. I rang the number given to me and someone arranged for Shona to come and talk to me about the program.

I explained my background to Shona and told her I wanted to read the old Horticulture assignments that I had. My goal was to read and write the test paper all by myself. Shona said, "You will have a lot of hard work ahead." It was a real challenge for me. I then started working towards those goals with the help of my first tutor, Pat. My first goal was to get a driver's licence. It took me over six months of hard work and determination to get there. The written test was the most important bit for me. I passed and I was so happy I showed everybody my licence.

I started to gain more confidence and I began a course in Horticulture for School Certificate. To read and do the assignments was very hard for me. There were 15 assignments in the first year with my tutor helping me once a week. Those assignments were a very big step for me from writing my first letter two years earlier.

After I finished the course in 1982, I applied for an apprenticeship through the City Council in Horticulture and got turned down. The Council's reason was that they thought that the study required would be too hard for me. They told me I didn't have enough qualifications and that I did not have a chance of getting through.

So, in 1983 I started to work towards the National Diploma of Horticulture which can take up to six years to complete. I had started with another tutor by then and we got on very well together and managed a great deal of hard work. The first year was tough going. I had eight assignments to complete and a three hour exam in November. I had applied through the Psychological Service for reader/writer assistance for the exam. They tested my reading and writing ability and then sent a report to the Trade Certification Board recommending that I be given assistance for the exam. I missed out on passing that exam by four marks. I felt at the time of getting that result, that it was the end of the world. But later on I thought I hadn't done too badly for my first exam. If I had given up at that time I would have been letting my tutor as well as myself down. Together we had done a lot of hard work.

Next year I went back to the old assignments and read them over and over again. I did the exam again by myself and just managed to pass with 50 marks this time.

In 1984 I was working at Mona Vale, a large homestead with very magnificent gardens. I completed Soil Science assignments and sat the exam and passed with 56 marks. I was very pleased with myself.

I put many hours into reading my assignments, practising my writing in the evenings and weekends. My determination made me feel much stronger and I was getting a lot more confidence to achieve my goal. Later in the year there was an article and photo of me in The Press newspaper about my achievements and the help I was getting to overcome my literacy problem with the assistance of the reading schemes. A lot of people saw and read the article and the Council wondered about me doing the exams. It was still not enough for them to give me an apprenticeship that year.

So next year I went out looking for help and support to back up my story. I was so determined that I was not going to give up, I went to Barry Brown and Dick Lowe of the Labourers' Union and explained the situation to them, and they said they might be able to help. Now I was getting somewhere. It took up to four months of hard work from Barry and Dick to try to change the Council minds about giving me an apprenticeship. They got very little response back, and so they decided to take my case much higher through the Council to the head personnel officer.

Head Over Heels

It was two days before Christmas when I heard about my apprenticeship. The director of Parks and Recreation came up to me at the work Christmas party and said: "I have got some very good news for you." He said: "You will be receiving a letter about your apprenticeship. You have been given one." I was so happy that my dream had come true after all these years of frustration and fighting for it. I was 'head over heels' with excitement.

In 1985 I started my apprenticeship. I got all of my 32 assignments done in five months with excellent marks and passed the first Qualifying Exam. It was not easy for me that year because I had a lot of pressure building up in my mind trying to cope with the mental strain of doing so much study. I wanted to prove to the City Council that they had been wrong, and that I could keep up with the other apprentices, or do better.

This year I am studying for the second qualifying exam, in November.

I hope this story will help other students who are trying to get an apprenticeship. Don't give up!

Michael's full story is available in print.
Marquet Michael, Michael's Challenge: Overcoming Illiteracy, Caxton Press, New Zealand, 1988
Details available from your State Adult Literacy Council or Caxton Press, 113 Victoria St., Christchurch, New Zealand.

THE LITERACY ISSUE

LYN CROCKER

I notice that the themes for the Conference are Literacy and Technology, Literacy and Employment, Literacy and Personal Development. All very fine themes and lofty ideals.

And I would like, firstly, to congratulate you all on your endeavours and attempts. However, in terms of this opening comment, I would like specifically to address the issue of personal development.

Now this theme of personal development is one that is often discussed, agonised over, and considered essential. At other times, it is acknowledged, deleted or tagged on to education. I would like to suggest to you that personal development, is the beginning of any type of education. Without it, nothing else makes sense.

You may very well ask, "What is personal development?" My answer is that it takes in the very essence and spirit of human existence. It is one big holistic approach to education. In this instance, I am specifically speaking of Aboriginal education in this country. Why holistic education? Well, my belief is that Aboriginal people are very discerning clientele of the education system. We could all learn from the latter. But firstly we must recognise it, then cater to it. My belief is that Aboriginal people want more than just an "academic exercise". They want, indeed even demand, an exercise that encompasses not only the academic, but the whole gamut, i.e. mental, emotional and spiritual.

It is these areas, that have often been missing from the curriculum – the "intangibles", for want of a better label. From my knowledge of Aboriginal education one of the many crises people go through, is "how to gain those badly needed skills needed in this type of complex, technological society, whilst at the same time retaining a sense of one's own Aboriginal identity."

Now I don't want to get into a debate about "identity" here, as that is one of those amorphous areas and another discussion. Essentially I am saying that any education system, no matter who the clientele is and who it caters for, does an injustice if these areas are not addressed or even adequately addressed.

If we are to talk about education, then these ARE the basics. But how often do we really give them any great credence? Seriously, I would ask you all to ponder this aspect. I know that many Aboriginal students have. They may not have articulated them but they have, in their own way, pondered them.

This then brings into question the issues of processes. And that is why I said before that Aboriginal people are very discerning clientele of the education system. For, in these processes, they are looking for enhancement of their whole being and not just the gaining of skills. Not that the latter is unimportant. It is, but in the past, when the processes were not entirely catered for, Aboriginal students opted out.

As a result, we all know the statistics. For example, that the basic level of education in the Aboriginal population is lower than for the general population. In this sense, we are all aware of the "facts". But are we really aware of the "realities". By this, I mean those "realities" which contribute to the general situation. The realities of the Aboriginal situation, is that self-image, esteem, personal development need to be enhanced along with the physical academic offerings.

I do not want to dwell too long on these points. More to sow some seeds of thought. For if we do not take into account these issues we are doing a grave injustice to our clientele. Shakespeare once said words to the effect "There is more

to heaven and earth than man has dreamt of". I would say to you that there is more to education and literacy than just the curriculum. Many of you, I know, are thoroughly aware of this already, otherwise you would not be here today at this conference.

This issue of literacy is essential to survival. There is no doubting this. But literacy is only one of many tools of survival. One can have essentially a literate person, with low self-esteem and self-image. We need to produce more than people leading "lives of quiet desperation". We need to equip our students with the full gamut of human empowerment. This, I believe, is what education is about. This is what literacy is about. My challenge today to you is to go beyond the basics and the essentials of which we are aware. It is to explore those areas which make up the sum total of the human spirit.

LITERACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

TERRY O'GORMAN

It was with some interest that I read the invitation to me some months ago to speak at this Conference.

Why would a National Conference on adult literacy want to hear from a civil libertarian (which in this state has for years been regarded the closest thing to the devil), let alone a practising criminal lawyer?

I mulled over it and spoke to my wife. "What's literacy got to do with civil liberties?" I asked her. Prior to taking on (some five years ago) the onerous job of full-time mother, my wife was a very competent social worker in the Brisbane Children's Court and later with the Aboriginal Legal Service. I, myself, for four years in the late '70's had worked full-time with the Aboriginal Legal Service in Brisbane but for the last six or so years have been involved full-time in private practice doing nothing but criminal work. I realised, as I discussed things with my wife, how one's perceptions are coloured by one's current existence and pre-occupations.

I was reminded of the very many challenges to so-called confessional evidence that used to be taken when I worked at the Aboriginal Legal Service, simply because it was obvious from taking instructions from an Aboriginal client that he did not understand concepts which were basic to Police questioning procedures. For example, a Police officer is supposed to warn a suspect when questioning him, in these terms:

> I warn you that you are not obliged to answer any questions but that any answers you do give will be taken down and later used as evidence in court. Do you understand that?

It took me a while to understand why such an apparently simple concept was just so much gobbledegook to a person being questioned in a police station. And let me make the obvious point that the psychological pressure of just being in a police station under interrogation is tremendously disorienting, even without the threats and assaults that all too often accompany this procedure.

When you look at this apparently simple warning and examine the number of concepts contained in it, it is little wonder, in retrospect, that changes were eventually forced upon Queensland police in the way they had to administer the warning to a suspect. Look at the number of concepts contained in what I have just read out to you.

1. I warn you
2. You are not obliged to answer any questions
3. As any answers you do give
4. Will be taken down
5. Will be used in evidence
6. in court
7. Do you understand that

With great difficulty and over very many challenges to so-called confessional evidence in the supreme and district courts (and with the assistance of a couple of very competent psychologists and linguists) we were able to persuade many (initially sceptical) Supreme and District Court judges that the format of the warning had to be changed.

It eventually was and a general instruction went out to all Queensland police that the warning, in respect of disadvantaged people, was to be administered like this:

i. **Form of caution** – The child should be advised and questioned in the manner shown below and his answers to the questions recorded.

> Q. I am going to ask you some more questions about this matter. You need not say

> anything unless you wish to do so. Anything you say will be taken down and may be given to the Court. Do you understand that you don't have to speak?
>
> A
>
> Q Do you understand that if you do speak, it will be taken down in writing?
>
> A
>
> Q Do you understand that if you do speak, it may then be told to a Court?
>
> A

4.54A Fig I

It may not surprise some of you to learn that the court room debate then shifted to what was "a disadvantaged person". Many police would justify not administering the simplified warning by saying: "Oh, but the defendant could speak as well as you and I" and therefore was not disadvantaged. Without even attempting to find out the suspect's basic level of comprehension by administering the simplified, broken up warning, many police officers made their "man in the street" assessment of a suspect's level of comprehension. In this context, it is important to realise that our system of law (at least in theory) holds that if a suspect does not understand the warning, the answers obtained from him under police questioning are inadmissable in court. This is, quite properly, basic to our system of criminal law.

But other than attacking the police (of which I have been accused from time to time over the years), what's the point of all this?

In a research project just released by the internationally respected Australian Institute of Criminology entitled "Trends and Issues – Adults under Supervision and Detention Order" the following quite startling (and for this conference, most relevant) finding is made:

> Around 80% of all persons under corrections did not complete secondary education. Three fifths of those in prison were unemployed at the time of arrest ..."

By way of digression – A very compelling reason to get married is contained in the finding that 60% of the persons under supervision and detention were never married. That statistic is, perhaps, for another conference, at another time.

So as to head off some of the strident objections that I often get when delivering a paper of this sort, let me make a couple of obvious but basic points:

> Firstly, people who commit violent crime must be jailed, if the crime is serious enough. The community is entitled to protection from violent crime.
>
> Secondly, not all police verbal or fabricate evidence or stand over all assault suspects. But many do.
>
> Thirdly, it is important, if the concept of British justice is to mean anything in practice, that (no matter how minor or horrific the crime) the right person is convicted on the right evidence. By the right evidence I mean to refer not only to evidence which is not fabricated by the police but (to concentrate on the theme relevant to this conference) also on reliable evidence.

Time after time, year after year, in cases ranging from murder down to shoplifting, criminal defence lawyers tear their hair out in frustration at the difficulty in convincing magistrates, judges and jurors that a suspect simply didn't understand what he was being asked. Even the honest, non-verballing police officer often has considerable difficulty faithfully and accurately recording in a typewritten record of interview a conversation he has with the suspect on the issue of, say, intent.

Intent is basic to the criminal law. Did you intend to kill, maim or self defend when you pointed the rifle and discharged it at the complainant? What was your intention when you smashed the broken glass in the complainant's face during the course of the bar room brawl? Did you think the woman was consenting when you made sexual advances to her during the course of a long, rowdy and drunken party?

So, how can a police interview between an only partly literate suspect and a quite literate police officer be made more reliable?

To answer this question, you have to understand how the traditional, non-

verballing, non-assaulting, non-intimidating policeman carries out an interview. When a record of interview is being conducted, the questioner will ask the question and record the answer. But between asking the recorded question and writing the recorded answer, there is often considerable discussion between the questioning police officer and the suspect. This discussion can often have a significant bearing on what the suspect intended to say in the abbreviated or precised answer which is eventually written down. Unless this interchange, which, under current procedure is not recorded, is accurately recorded by some means, the magistrate or jury are going to be given a false picture as to what actually went on in the record of interview.

This is why tape-recording of police interviews is so important. Throughout Australia, in the last number of years, the tape-recording debate has raged. Police forces, like the boy with his finger in the dyke, have held out to the end. But even in Queensland, the reality that we are in the last quarter of the twentieth century has finally arrived. Last Monday, after the weekly Queensland cabinet meeting it was announced that tape-recording of police interviews had, in principle, been agreed upon. The police minister and acting police commissioner had gone to London and come back supporting the concept. For students of Queensland police history, it is pertinent to point out that a government appointed inquiry into the criminal law as far back as 1977 recommended the mandatory tape-recording of police interviews. But the powerful police lobby successfully opposed the introduction of tape recorders for over ten years while, during that time, individual police officers would use tape recorders when it suited them. The Fitzgerald Inquiry into police corruption and gross other malpractices, has changed all that.

Tape-recording is necessary not only to protect the suspect against verballing and downright fabrication of evidence. It is also necessary to ensure that the honest conscientious policeman (of which there are a few left) gets it right. In other words, not only must the record of an interview be true. It must also be reliable.

It is on this aspect of reliability that I wish to focus.

Many of us working in the criminal courts have despaired of the ability of people to understand even apparently simple things that occur in the courts. By way of example, in the Queensland children's court there is a sentencing order known as "admonished and discharged". That is, if the offence and circumstances so justify, the juvenile is found guilty, warned and discharged without a conviction being recorded. The number of juveniles who later tell you that they have been "abolished and disturbed" or any other combination of misunderstandings, never ceases to amaze me. Similar misunderstandings and misinter-pretations are made in the police interview.

In order to ensure that all relevant exchanges between a suspect and a police officer are properly recorded, not only must there be tape-recording in the police station but tape-recording must be taken back to the point of first contact between the police and the suspect, be that on the street, at a suspect's house or in a hotel, or wherever. Police, in their typical opposition to tape-recording, will say that this is not possible. But they used to say for a variety of reasons described in the 1977 inquiry report as "patently absurd", that tape-recording inside the police station itself was not possible. A system has to be devised to prevent what occurred in the U.K. a couple of years ago when mandatory tape-recording of police interviews in police stations was introduced. Defence lawyers noticed a remarkable increase in the number of so-called confessions before the suspect arrived at the police station. There was an increase in the number of police cars circling the city while confessions were extracted from people while the police were beyond the reach of the tape-recorder.

Victoria has recently taken a sensible step

to stop this practice being used by Victorian police. A Victorian committee set up to look at tape-recording of police interviews with suspects, headed by the Victorian director of public prosecutions (John Coldrey) has recommended tape-recording of interviews with police suspects. A new law was passed by the Victorian Parliament to that effect in 1987. This law quite clearly states that any so-called admission made before arrival at the police station will be, simply, inadmissable in evidence unless it is confirmed on tape at the police station on arrival there. This law was proposed by the Coldrey Committee which consisted of prosecutors, police and defence lawyers.

Queensland needs to do the same. After eleven years of agitating for tape-recording, criminal defence lawyers are not going to tolerate the "verbal" being moved from inside the police station to the police car en-route to the police station. The Queensland Police Minister and Commissioner don't need any more trips to London. A phone call to Victoria will tell them all they need to know.

CONCLUSION

The Conference organisers told me that they wanted an address from me which would "broaden your horizons" so far as literacy and the criminal justice system was concerned. I have attempted to do this. I do not expect everyone here to agree with what I have said. But, where, as the figures I quoted earlier show, such a large proportion of the prison population have literacy problems, it is of the highest importance that confessional evidence presented to magistrates and juries, gets it right. The partly or fully illiterate person is putty in the hands of the unscrupulous police officer and his answers are often misunderstood by the honest police officer.

A thorough, proper, fair dinkum system of tape-recording will go a long way to ensure that those serving terms of imprisonment are the right people convicted on the right evidence. A system of criminal law that proudly boasts the British tradition, deserves nothing less.

DESIGNING A TUTOR TRAINING PROGRAM FOR TUTORS OF ESL

LYNETTE BOWYER

Throughout Australia there are a number of educational schemes which involve recruiting volunteers from the community at large, providing these people with some form of training, and then allotting them to one or more students to perform some sort of tutoring or assisting task. Often such schemes continue to operate with minor adjustments over a number of years. In most cases, because there are success stories, there is little difficulty in claiming that the scheme is effective. The burning issue in these times of accountability, however, is how effective is an effective scheme and, indeed, perhaps even more pertinent, can we be more effective?

In this paper, I discuss a tutor scheme which had been operating in what might be considered a successful manner for a number of years and a study which I undertook to look at what I believe to be one of the major ingredients influencing the effectiveness of such a scheme – the training component, in order to see if it could be conducted more effectively. I hasten to add that there are many factors upon which the success of a tutor scheme relies: organisational issues, matching arrangements, and the supply of resources, to name but a few. Nevertheless, I maintain that without good training, tutors cannot reasonably be expected to carry out effectively what is required of them.

In my study I set out to look at some of the factors affecting the course design of the training component for a tutor scheme. Although the scheme featured in the study is for immigrants who, on the whole have a specified vocational goal, I believe that the approach and some of the findings are applicable to a variety of tutor programs. Because it was an extensive study comprising a number of sub-studies, time only permits a cursory account of those areas which appear to have less interest. I shall summarise the more pertinent issues in a little more detail. First, there is a discussion on the language learners. This will be covered briefly through two sub-areas which, of course are highly inter-related: aspects of needs analysis and the learner in the Australian context. Next I focus on the tutors, describing a sub-study which I conducted into tutors working in the program. This is followed by a further sub-study into some principles relating to the course design of EFL/ESL (English as a Foreign Language/English as a Second Language) teacher training courses. Throughout the paper I shall describe how I collated the information derived from the sub-studies and applied it to produce a course outline for a tutor training component. I should, perhaps, point out that some areas may appear a little sketchy or even unsubstantiated. This is because the sub-studies were inter-related in a complicated way with information accruing from chapter to chapter and building on points alluded to in other sub-studies and time, unfortunately, does not permit further elaboration.

Background Information

The Migrant Tutor Scheme was set up in October 1982 to meet an urgent need, viz. to help those students with vocationally oriented goals. Largely, these fell into two categories: those who wished to enter TAFE or other vocational or tertiary courses; and those seeking specific assistance in meeting the Australian requirements for acceptance of qualifications gained in their country of origin. Those who are familiar with the history of ESL provision in Australia will know that there were very few courses designed to meet such needs at the time and there was certainly, to my knowledge, no other tutor program in the country with such specific vocational aims. The volunteers who joined the program were, and still are, people who could offer the specific vocational skills needed: tradesmen, nurses, teachers, other professionals and so on. The scheme had been set up in a hurry and pressure of work left no time for educational planning or rationalisation of curriculum design for a training course. It was decided that volunteers had to be given some sort of preparation to acquaint them with the range of student needs they might encounter and also some basic skills with which to carry out their tutoring. The course would be 20 hours, composed of one two hour session a week over 10 weeks. This was an emergency decision based on the fact that

volunteer programs in Australia for native speaker literacy tutoring tended to have 10 to 16 hours of training at the time; training of ESL tutoring, with its added complications of oral skills as well as other linguistic and cultural factors would have to be longer. Thus, a program was drawn up and the Migrant Tutor Scheme came into existence at the South Brisbane College of TAFE and continued with little major change, other than certain minor refinements to the training program, over the years.

SUB STUDY ONE:

Analysing the Needs of Language Learners

Focussing on the language learner, one of the sub-studies involved investigating the literature available on the needs of EFL/ESL learners. Those aspects emerging from the literature which seemed most appropriate were then applied to the students using the scheme. This information was incorporated into the training so that the tutors could be acquainted with a model of learners' needs which would apply to their situation.

A useful dichotomy for dealing with this was that presented by Brindley (1984:31) in his work, "Needs Analysis and Objective Setting in the Adult Migrant Education Program" in which he described how Richterich (1972) delineates between "objective" or foreseeable needs which can be analysed about learners and learners' language proficiency, and "subjective" needs which are unforeseeable or partly forseeable needs relating to learners' perceptions, personalities, attitudes and so on.

In order to deal with the objective aspects of learners' needs, the model chosen was that outlined by John Munby in his work "Communicative Syllabus Design" (1978). Although there has been a considerable amount of criticism of this work it should be remembered that Munby has outlined the modifications which he would make to his original model, and it is the modified model which has been used. Furthermore, for the purposes of acquainting tutors with students' needs it should be acknowledged at the outset that the model deals only with the objective aspects of students' needs. It was chosen for two reasons: first, because it is a model which focusses on ESP (English for Specific Purposes) programs; and second, because of its systematicity and attention to detail which are important in the case of tutors who undertake only a short training period and are not really in a position, initially at any rate, to adopt the eclecticism of an experienced teacher. From the Munby specifications, an activity sheet for tutors was designed to make them aware of the objective needs of the learner which the program co-ordinator would consider when designing their individual programs. The activity sheet (Appendix A), which took into account Munby's more recent additions to his model, focussed on the learners receiving tuition through the tutor scheme in the vocational context of Australia.

Less easy to deal with were the subjective aspects of needs analysis. The literature describing the area is diverse and in many cases empirical research has not been developed to support many of the theories and intuitions which researchers and practitioners have. Nevertheless, tutors can be sensitised to affective and personality factors although it is unlikely that this can be dealt with in the cut and dried fashion adopted for investigating objective needs. Rather, these types of needs were possibly better dealt with throughout the course. There certainly seemed to be a strong case for encouraging tutors to communicate with and get to know their students and to find out their preferences in order to look beyond simply meeting their objective needs.

SUB STUDY TWO:

The Language Learner and the Vocational Context in Australia

Still concentrating on the language learner, this part of the study focussed largely on procedures for gaining recognition of overseas qualifications and for operating in vocational areas in Australia. It pertained very strongly to the objective needs of the learner. The picture which emerged was one of complication, featuring a considerable number of anomalies from State to State and between vocations. In short, it could often be a bureaucratic nightmare for a person trying to progress through the procedures. Two case studies provided insights into the lengthy procedure required during which those involved suffered stress, anxiety and frustration, a situation which many ESL teachers would be all too aware of.

The information yielded from this part of the study suggested that a training program would need

to address a number of issues. It re-iterated the need for tutors to be aware of the objective and subjective aspects of learner's needs and also highlighted the integral nature of the Australian context in assessing needs. It clarified the role of English for many of the learners: occupational specific language for daily tasks in a vocational context; in some cases, language as a medium for the assessment of expertise and knowledge; in most professional areas, language for English language proficiency tests (with ratings varying from 3 to 4 on the Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating scale) in the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing; and on occasions, the language needed to cope with the study required for upgrading qualifications or undertaking re-training or initial training in a field. It also pointed out the need for tutor trainees to be equipped with skills and strategies necessary for tutoring within these contexts.

SUB STUDY THREE:

Volunteer Tutors of English as a Second Language

Having focussed on the students receiving tuition through the tutor scheme, the next part of the study looked at the tutors involved in carrying out that tuition, and receiving training in order to do this. It should be pointed out that the investigation carried out in this part of the study was not intended as an evaluation of the original training program of the Migrant Tutor Scheme. Rather it was carried out in order to gain insights into information available which could contribute positively towards the compilation of a new training component.

Research was undertaken in two ways. First, there was an investigation into the background of people who had tutored for the Migrant Tutor Scheme, looking into objective factors such as age, sex, educational qualifications, vocational training and experience, by examining the records of a number of past and current tutors. The second piece of research using subjective data looked at why people volunteer to assist migrants with language; the type of recognition preferred for the tutoring; and their views regarding the length of a training component.

In the first section, a profile of the tutors was presented by examining statistical data on all tutors (82 in number) who had tutored at any time between 1 January, 1985, and 9 September, 1986. The most significant information yielded related to data elicited under the heading "Areas of Study/Qualifications". Of the 77 tutors who had responded, it was discovered that 67 (87%) had received tertiary level tuition, a fact which assisted in determining the level at which the new training program could be aimed. It was also learned that 18 (23.37%) had had at least some formal teacher training. Certain other information was able to be derived from this data. For instance, when information was elicited as to why the volunteers wished to tutor, only 8 of the 79 indicated that they could also learn from the experience in addition to contributing to the student, a point for consideration in deciding how the training would deal with issues pertaining to the role of the tutor.

In the second section, subjective data were derived from a questionnaire which was posted to 96 tutors in September, 1986, the 14 people additional to the first study resulting from a new intake of tutor trainees. The initial issue investigated was the duration of a training program as it was felt that because the trainees were volunteers, there would be an optimum time beyond which they would not be prepared to train. As mentioned earlier, the current training period was 20 hours. The question, therefore, was whether they would be prepared to undergo training for longer than that in order to receive more preparation for tutoring and if so, for how long. The question was presented in such a way as to try to ensure that the tutors thought about the issue realistically in terms of their own time commitments:

The results indicated a much greater commitment to the importance of training than I had supposed:

Table 1: Duration in Training According to Tutor Groupings

Duration of Training in Number of Hours	Number of Tutors	% of Total Tutors
20 hours or more	75	96.15
24 hours or more	53	67.94
30 hours or more	35	44.87
36 hours or more	18	23.07
40 hours or more	16	20.51
50 hours or more	4	5.12

Only 24 of the 78 tutors who responded (30.76%) indicated that they wished to train for 20 hours or fewer. Given that the current training program involved 20 hours, it was significant that two thirds of the respondents stated that they would like to undergo a minimum program of 24 hours, with more than half preferring at least 25 hours, and as many as a quarter opting for a training program three quarters longer than the current course of 20 hours. The figures seemed to support a case for extending the training component. While 24 hours seemed to be the most appropriate duration, the one hour difference between that figure and 25 hours represented only a matter of minutes in a program offered part-time over a period of weeks. Reconsidering the statistics in this light it seemed reasonable to conclude that a duration of between 24 and 30 hours would be appropriate.

Information yielded in other questions influenced the decision regarding the course length and mode of offering. To summarise the results, a training component running over ten to twelve weeks, of one night a week for between two to three hours seemed the most desirable model to implement. It should be pointed out, however, that the tutors who responded were largely involved in training at night; a number of them had been working all day. Tutors involved in training during the day may well have furnished different information.

The second issue investigated through the questionnaire looked at why people joined the scheme. It had become apparent over the years that people had a range of reasons for undertaking volunteer tutoring. Ann Oner (1985:125) in her detailed evaluation of the effectiveness of one Home Tutor Scheme in the Adult Migrant Education program also investigated the reasons why people volunteer to tutor. I found her delineation between altruistic reasons such as the desire to help others, and personal reasons such as preparation for teaching or social work, a helpful dichotomy to work with. I was particularly interested in the latter, in this instance, as I was aware that a few teachers were using the scheme because they hoped to get into ESL teaching in the future. I also knew that in addition to employed people there were some unemployed people with vocational skills in the program, as well as a few who were retired. It seemed important to find out precisely why people were joining the scheme, in order to meet their needs through the training and the course awards, if there were to be any.

The data yielded were enlightening. It seems that one reason why between a quarter and a third (29.87%) of the tutors were undertaking tutoring was because they were seriously interested in accessing the field of ESL teaching. A quarter (25.97%) were also moderately interested in the notion. Significantly, only a third (32.46%) were categorically not interested in this prospect.

The second part of the question determined whether one reason why volunteers were tutoring was to extend their skills for any other current or possible future employment. Again, the data were enlightening. It was discovered that only a quarter (24.35%) had no employment related motive of any kind in volunteering to tutor. To summarise the whole situation, I discovered that three quarters of the people who tutored did so with some kind of job-oriented reasons in mind. These were largely, though not entirely, related to possible future employment in ESL teaching. This information appeared significant in that it was possibly a contributing factor to the tutors' desire for additional training as discovered in Question One, as well as indicating that the issue of recognition for tutoring could also be important.

The following findings resulted from an examination of the latter issue. There were seventy-seven tutor respondants.

Table 2: Recognition For Tutoring

Recognition	Tutors	Tutors
* Statement of attendance	18	23.37
* Certificate in tutoring	53	68.83
Other	6	7.79

* Queensland TAFE nomenclature at the time of the survey.

Given the findings in Question Two, it did not appear surprising that such a high percentage of the tutors (68.83%) were happy to undergo assessment in order to receive certification recognising their tutoring efforts. Since motives for tutoring, in the majority of cases, to some extent involved acquiring skills which were employment oriented, there appeared to be a strong case for designing a course with a system of awards. It was also worth considering, however, that the remaining 31.16% of the tutors who responded to this question did not wish to become involved in assessment. It was important to recognise that the voluntary contribution made by this group of people was no less worthy than that of the former group. A sound solution to the situation seemed to be that articulated by one of those who responded to the alternative "Other" and then commented "Perhaps prospective tutors could be asked to choose whether they want (1) No recognition; (2) Statement of Attendance; or (3) Certificate in Tutoring (* Queensland TAFE nomenclature at the time of the survey – A Statement of Attainment is now probably more appropriate for (3)).

A number of tutors also volunteered comments at the end of the questionnaire. These proved useful in designing the training component as they seemed to indicate three points: a need for more hands-on assistance in how to prepare and effect a lesson; a desire to have more opportunity to observe or work with students during training; and a wish to have more post training sessions with the opportunity for peer discussion and added input in areas of need, such as grammar. It was noted that the tutors who felt unprepared or wished for more assistance with lesson preparation and delivery had not received any type of teacher training. Observing the disadvantage of those with no teaching experience in her training group, one tutor wrote, "I suggest that for those who have no teaching background, more time be given to discussing the planning of a lesson". Again this advice from a tutor seemed the most viable and appropriate way of dealing with the situation, and was reflected in the resulting course structure.

Conclusions to the Questionnaire Study

From the data relating to the course duration, it appeared that an appropriate course length was to be between 24 and 30 hours. In the light of the various comments proffered by the tutors, it seemed prudent to opt for the greatest duration possible within this range. Thus the training segment would be 30 hours long. However, to accommodate the difficulties experienced by tutors without teacher training, the last five hours of the course would draw on the culmination of training in the previous 25 hours and concentrate on practical lesson preparation and delivery tasks and techniques. Trained teachers would receive exemptions against these sessions but would have the option of attending if desired.

Given that the first sub-study of the tutors revealed that such a high percentage (87%) had had study experience at a tertiary institution, it was decided that the training component could be pitched at a level commensurate with these findings.

Because it was discerned that a number of tutors were joining the program for personal reasons relating to employment, especially in the ESL field, as well as for altruistic reasons, recognition for their efforts seemed a reasonable option. Hence, the course was to be offered with three possible outcomes: first, no recognition; second, a statement of attendance, and third, some sort of certification which includes assessment. When joining the scheme, tutors would be made aware of the requirements for the latter two options so that they would be in a position to make informed choices regarding their participation.

It was also decided that for some tutors, particularly those with teacher training, it would be appropriate to start tutoring soon after training commenced.

Finally, the decision was made to include a minimum of one compulsory refresher workshop/seminar session after a certain amount of practical tutoring had taken place, for those tutors opting for any sort of recognition. This would ensure that there was a forum for any difficulties arising during the initial tutoring period. Workshops would form a regular but optional part of inservice after that.

Additional Comments

An extract from the completed course outline (Appendix B) will serve to fill in the details which I have been unable to provide here owing to time constraints or to the fact that decision-making resulted from some other aspect of the main study not generated by the sub-studies outlined above.

SUB STUDY FOUR:

Principles of ESL/EFL Teacher Training Course Design

In this section of the study certain principles of course design as they relate specifically to training teachers of ESL/EFL were investigated with a view to assessing the relevance of these findings to the design of a tutor training course. The literature in the area was examined under the following headings: aims, course content; sequencing of content; modes of training; relationship between rationale and technique; relationship between trainer and trainees; modes of assessment; and channels of feedback on performance to trainees. Information from this sub-study is discussed below and then the relevant points are linked with a tutor training program design. At the outset, it must be pointed out that the literature available in the area of ESL/EFL teacher training which deals with such issues is really quite scarce compared with work carried out in the area of second or foreign language learning. Hence, I found myself somewhat constrained by the dearth of writing available on the subject. Nevertheless, it was worthwhile undertaking the investigation.

Aims and Objectives

There was almost no mention of aims or objectives in the literature which I was able to locate. One of the few writers who does discuss aims is Mary Finocchiaro (1984:30) who claims that the aim is "to enable the trainee to meet any immediate need in a particular teaching situation". I found expressions of aims and objectives almost solely located in course outline documents, a variety of which I had procured from a range of training institutions throughout Australia.

Course Content

It was immediately discerned that certain writers (Ellis:1986:92; Mariani:1979:74; Phillips:1986:7; Collins:1986:3) felt the need to make a distinction between pre-service and in-service teacher training. The relevance of this delineation to a tutor program is elucidated by Mariani (ibid.) who defined pre-service teachers as those who are "at the beginning of their career, and have just, or have not yet, started working in the classroom". In the Migrant Tutor Program, the teachers who had received training were in the minority and even fewer people had ESL/EFL qualifications or experience. The appropriateness of pursuing information based on pre-service training where writers made such a delineation, seemed justified.

Time does not permit a detailed presentation of the literature investigated. However, in the area of course content the works of four writers were looked at in some detail: Strevens:1977:35 and 71-77; Mariani:1979:73-78; Moore:1984:79-81 and 1985:61-64; and Collins:1986:3-5. Although these four models of ESL/EFL teacher training content spanned a decade in their presentation, it is interesting to note that there was little difference in the basic concept of what should constitute the content of such a course. There was a total concurrence regarding the necessity for a theoretical component which dealt with the phonological, morphological, sytactical and lexical nature of language. The more recent works of Moore and Collins, taking cognizance of later work in the area, added to their models information regarding the nature of discourse. All writers alluded in some way to the need, in the area of theory, to draw on the contributions made by psycho-linguistics and socio-linguistics. The areas of methodology and actual teaching skills became less easy to define. Strevens and Collins presented models exhibiting a delineation of methodology and actual practical teaching, although again Collin's recent model reflected more current thinking in its learner-centered ESL teaching approach with the inclusion of affective factors which related to the individual and group. The major differences in the models appeared to lie less in content than in

emphasis. Moore and Collins, for instance, placed more emphasis on appropriateness and the social context of language than the two earlier models of Strevens and Mariani. There was overt agreement, however, that some form of practical teaching was essential.

Sequencing of Content

Nothing was located in the literature which pertained to the actual specifics of ordering content. This was in contrast with the debate which has almost raged, particularly in more recent times, around sequencing issues in ESL/EFL language teaching. However, two works made more global comments which seemed relevant and have therefore been briefly outlined below.

In an article which specifically attacked Strevens' 1977 model of teacher training because of the failure by Strevens to impose any order of importance on the different elements in his model (approach; pedagogy, methodology, instruction and teaching; syllabus design; and materials construction), Rossner (1985:151/152) made an important point. He argued that these four elements should be viewed hierarchically. Approach would come at the top of the hierarchy as it involved introspection about the nature of teaching and learning and must be examined from both a theoretical point of view and one based on experience. Syllabus design lay next below it as it entailed the interpretation of principles inherent in an approach and relied on experience with students. Materials construction came next as it involved the application of the principles of syllabus design. The base level of the hierarchy was class-room decision-making in which, Rossner maintained, most language teachers were almost exclusively concerned. While content should be drawn from all four levels, he pointed out that pre-service courses would investigate level four to an extent depending on time and the level of the participants but would not look at the other levels in detail. In other words, beginner teachers needed first to be able to work with other people's materials and within a syllabus created by others.

Moore (1984:91) suggested that at the pre-service level there should be a large base of learning about the common goals applicable to entry points of learners and to teaching outcomes which decreased as the level of training towards higher degrees increased. She pointed out that in reality, this probably meant that pre-service courses needed to provide specific content to accommodate the teaching needs of different groups, such as adult ESL learners, primary EFL learners, pre-school Aborigines and so on, a point also made by Collins (1986:3) in her discussion on course content.

As mentioned earlier, both of these viewpoints seemed not only valid but totally relevant to the focus of a tutor training program.

Modes of Training

Probably the most useful literature located in this area was a very analytical framework outlined by Rod Ellis (1986:91-95). Through this framework, Ellis aimed at raising the trainees' awareness so they developed an understanding of the principles of EFL teaching and/or became acquainted with some actual techniques to use in teaching. His system involved a series of taxonomies of activities employing actual materials or "data" used by the teacher trainer, operations which the trainees were required to carry out and procedures whereby such activities might be carried out. Ellis' taxonomies were able to be adapted to the Australian situation and the particular goals of the tutor training course and were included in the training program under the heading "Suggested Teaching Strategies" (Appendix C, Bowyer, 1987 and Ellis, 1986).

The Relationship Between the Rationale and Techniques

Little information was located which related theory and practice. However, it was interesting to note that most of the material reviewed adhered to the traditional trend of offering theoretical input under certain subject headings which would then be further sub-divided into a number of different areas. For example, one of the areas listed under the subject "Psycho-linguistics" might be "First Language Acquisition". It was this familiar trend which provoked comment from Jordan (1985:139-143) about the difficulty of "preventing the course from being a mish-mash of odds and ends which are presented separately" and which inexperienced students are left to integrate. Jordan made the point that the process of language needed to and could mirror language teaching. He maintained that this could be achieved by involving the trainees in the various aspects of planning, teaching, evaluating and adapting the course, by providing them with instant feedback (with formal feedback sessions programmed into the course), by employing variety in the training procedure, by

emphasising what you do as a teacher with particular focus on the aspect of "doing" through a substantial period of classroom performance and through workshops, by adopting a flexible approach and by being totally honest about the difficulties in teaching but also highlighting the need for support and assistance. He believed that such an approach would focus neither on theory nor practice but on the relationship between them.

It seemed important that during their training, tutors should see the relevance of all aspects of their program. Hence Jordan's suggestions proved helpful in designing the course.

The Relationship Between the Trainer and the Trainees

Again there was little information in the literature to assist the tutor course designer. Das (1984:328/9) observed that teacher training had been slow to respond to the changing emphasis in EFL/ESL towards a process rather than product orientation. Whereas analysing learners' needs (objective and subjective needs) occupied a major focus in language teaching, at this stage it seemed to apply much more to language teachers and their learners than to teacher trainers and their trainees. Das pointed out how one of the impeding factors in this area involved providing mechanisms for summative evaluation and the consequent certification for process learning.

Modes of Assessment

Because there was little assistance to be found in the literature which specified precisely the nature of assessment which should take place in teacher training programs, the assessment procedures of four different ESL/EFL teacher training courses offered in Australia were examined. It was found that all four courses incorporated into their overall procedures, to a greater or lesser extent, assessment by examination. Three of the four courses insisted on the participants undertaking practice teaching. This was directly assessed in two of the three cases. Other assessment mechanisms involved the following: practical tests and exercises; long essays; reports on field work or case studies; the production of sets of materials or demonstration tapes; seminar presentations; and participation in workshops. Some programs, in addition, featured a minimum attendance requirement of 80% of the course. A few also included compulsory lesson observations.

Channels of Feedback to Trainees on their Performance

The Royal Society of Arts conference reports of 1978, 1979 and 1982 mentioned the subject of feedback on a number of occasions. The 1982 report, with reference to teaching practice, indicated that it was imperative to provide immediate feedback through an individual counselling process. Counselling "surgeries" and individual tutorials were also seen in the 1978 and 1979 reports as important for the facilitation of feedback on assignments and class tests. The 1982 report mentioned the usefulness of providing feedback through peer group work. In another section of the report, mechanisms were suggested for providing feedback on written work. Some of these included: writing comments on essays; circulating marked essays; after marking work, providing a draft of points and a summary of strong and weak areas; holding personal tutorials with each trainee for discussion of the essay; holding plenary discussions on a particular essay; peer group marking and discussion sessions; providing a post-essay check-list thus guiding trainees to evaluate efforts through the eyes of an examiner; and giving a list of theoretical references to clarify weaknesses in an assignment.

Conclusions

It appeared that the most appropriate teacher training model on which to base a tutor training course was the pre-service model for inexperienced teachers, as already mentioned. The potential tutors would be receiving training directed towards meeting the needs of a particular group, in this case overseas qualified adults seeking recognition for their qualifications in Australia. The importance of language context would dictate the thrust of the course content which would involve tutoring skills, methodology and theory. However, since the aim of the course was to train tutors to operate at a basic operational level, training would concentrate on preparing them with a broad base of skills and would only include those aspects of methodology and theory deemed absolutely necessary for operation at this level. All trainees seeking recognition for their tutoring would undergo a period of practice tutoring as part of their basic training.

It was decided to use a variety of modes of training with every effort being made to provide practical input and to ensure that tutors made the links between different aspects of their training.

A consideration of their individual learning needs was to be integral to the delivery process. Constant consultation with tutors needed to be a feature of the training wherever possible to facilitate feedback.

The decision-making which result from the information studied under the assessment section was rationalised in the major study and culminated in the assessment guidelines for the final course outline of the subject "Tutor Training in English as a Second Language": (Appendix D)

FINAL COMMENTS ARISING FROM THE OVERALL STUDY

One of the major indications from the study suggested the need for a double focus in the design of a tutor training course. It was as if two sets of needs analyses were necessary. One approach for a potential designer might be to establish the objective needs of the language learners by investigating the parameters involved. In this way s/he would become au fait with who the learners were, the type of English needed, where and with whom it would be needed, the medium of communication, the importance of receptive and productive areas, the target level needed and the attitudinal factors involved. A similar investigation into the potential tutors was then suggested in order to acquaint the course designer with the group which was to be trained. Obviously a different instrument needed to be used to help to establish relevant factors such as age, ethnic background, languages spoken and so on. Added dimensions, such as qualifications and experience were found to be information appropriate to the type of specific course design which I undertook. However, there may be situations in other training programs where the goals of the program are different and where this particular information may be of little significance while other data may be of value. Having established the objective needs of the language learners and tutor trainees, the course designer was in a position to start planning the course. A flexible design mechanism was important to allow for slight variations in each course because of the different participants involved. Furthermore, once the course was underway, owing to the subjective needs of the trainees, it was probable that additional adaptations would occur. It was suggested that the trainees should participate in this process wherever possible. It seemed that the more the course mirrored the behaviour of the "ideal" tutor in operation, the greater the opportunity for trainees to experience tutor-like behaviour. They should, therefore, be in a better position to adhere to the desired model once they commenced their own tutoring.

A survey of potential tutor trainees before they undertook training might also contribute to the decision-making process regarding the course structure, duration, length of sessions, type of course award and so on.

Feedback was also an important catalyst for change and improvement. It was suggested that the course be designed to ensure that feedback could take place and that the resultant changes, if any, could be accommodated. In this study the feedback provided through the questionnaire provided a number of useful suggestions. For instance the inclusion of a workshop session as a bone fide subject in the course was in response to a need expressed. Another suggestion not detailed in this paper because of lack of time but appearing in the course structure guidelines, resulted in allowing tutoring to occur concurrently with the training, where appropriate. It was deemed important, as mentioned, to keep the course structure flexible enough to allow the incorporation of such changes.

Course designers involved in courses similar to the one in this study were urged to consider the pragmatic nature of the pre-service model of training, which concentrated on a broad based approach and equipped trainees with the skills needed for a basic operational level of functioning. It was found that the course should include components dealing with theory, methodology and teaching skills, and also a practice teaching element. However, it was suggested that through the pre-service model, these elements must retain an appropriate perspective.

Finally, it was suggested that while it was highly desirable to read as much of the literature as possible on the subject of course design for the particular group involved, there might well be a dearth of such literature available, as was found to be the case in this study. Gathering together a number of teacher training course outlines in the area could provide valuable assistance.

Having spent a considerable period of time investigating the course design of a training component for tutors, I shall conclude with the final statement from my study as I believe it to be true: "... a course of this nature relies on flexibility so that the dual needs of the learners who will be tutored,

and the tutor trainees may both be taken into account and adaptations may occur, where necessary, in a training program which integrates theory and practice and reflects the processes by which the tutors and learners will ultimately and fruitfully progress together towards their goals".

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Appendix A

THE LEARNER'S NEEDS

Objectives:

The objectives of this activity are:

- to make tutor trainees aware of how their student's program is devised;
- to assist tutor trainees to focus on *their* student's needs throughout their tutoring.

Instructions for Trainees

Listed below are a number of questions which, when answered, give a profile of a learner's needs. The program for your student will be based on similar information. When you start tutoring you should go through the checklist carefully, with your student in mind. At set intervals after that, say every three weeks or so, you should glance over it again and think about whether you need to re-focus your tutoring to meet your student's needs. Now carry out the instructions for this activity:

i. Read through the checklist.

ii. Apply it to a learner you know of, or know.

Information about the Learner

1. What is the student's age?
2. Is the student male or female?/
3. What is his/her country of origin?
4. What is his/her first language?/
5. Does he/she speak any other languages?
6. What is his/her present level of English? (elementary, intermediate or advanced)

Information about the Purpose of the English Required

7. What specific occupation is the English for?
8. What type of worker will the student be? (eg. clerical officer, technical officer, professional practitioner, tradesman etc.)
9. What field of work will the student work in? (eg. profession, trade, industry, public administration, business etc.)

Information about the Employment Setting

10. What kind of occupational premises will the student work at? (eg. company, office, hospital, hotel, factory, private house etc.)
11. In what other places will the student need English?
12. Will the student need English regularly, often, occasionally, seldom?
13. What sort of psychological and social environments will the English be needed for? (eg. educationally developed, professional, technologically sophisticated, public, quiet, noisy, hurried, formal, authoritarian, unsympathetic, aggressive etc.)

Information about the Type of Interaction Involved

14. Who will the student be interacting with?
15. What roles are involved in the interaction? (eg. senior-junior, employer-employee, management-worker, consultant-client, buyer-seller, adult-child, professional-professional, colleague-colleague etc.)

Information about the Nature of the Communication

16. What is the medium of communication: listening, speaking, reading, writing?

17. What is the channel of communication? (eg. face-to-face, telephone, two-way radio, print etc.)

Information about the Target Level of English

18. In terms of the target level of English needed in each of the areas, listening, speaking, reading and writing:
    What duration is the English needed? (short texts or long texts to be read, written etc.)
    How complicated is the English needed?
    How fast is the English needed?
    How proficiently must the unexpected be dealt with?

19. How tolerant to errors will the listeners/readers be?

Constraints

20. What constraints are operating in the above areas, if any? (eg. factors in the registration process affecting the target language, such as tests, interviews etc.)

Munby (1978), Royal Society of Arts, 1980, Bowyer (1987b)

Acknowledgements. This check list is based on the profile of communicative needs of a learner outlined in John Munby's "Communicative Syllabus Design" (C.U.P., 1978). Acknowledgement is also made to the E.S.P. Questionnaire in "R.S.A. Cert. T.E.F.L. Courses: Teacher-Training Techniques and Problem Areas. 1980 Conference Report" (Hilderstone International, Broadstairs, Kent, 1980).

Appendix B

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course comprises three subjects: the training subject, the practice subject and the follow-up workshop subject. The training subject is 30 hours in duration. It is suggested that the first session of this subject should serve as an induction session for potential tutor trainees (see Subject Topics in the training subject below for further details). The last five hours of the same subject concentrates on assisting participants with no previous teacher training by offering additional help with practical skills in preparing lessons and in delivery tasks and techniques. Tutor trainees with teacher training are not required to attend these five hours. The practical tutoring subject is 20 hours in duration. This may be commenced at any time subsequent to the first training session, at the discretion of the program co-ordinator, but could often take place following completion of the training subject. It would probably be those trainees with teaching experience who start tutoring first; trainees with no training may need to wait until the training is complete. The third subject, the follow-up workshop is a single session of two to three hours in duration. Trainees should have had a minimum of ten hours of tutoring prior to attending the workshop in order to gain maximum value from it. It is suggested that the complete course, including the workshop subject, be organised to fit into a single semester, wherever possible. Although not part of the course, additional optional workshops could be held from time to time, according to the needs of the tutors.

Subject	Duration
Tutor Training in English as a Second Language	30 hours
Practice Tutoring in English as a Second Language	20 hours
Workshop for Tutors of English as a Second Language	2-3 hours

The course is offered with three outcomes. In the first case, trainees may choose to refrain from involvement in assessment or attendance criteria. These people must appreciate, however, that they are likely to be allocated a student only if it is felt that they have enough skills to positively assist the person. The second option is for trainees who wish to fulfil only the attendance criteria. Thirdly, participants have the choice of fulfilling both the attendance and assessment criteria.

COURSE AWARD

The course award system is as follows:

1. No award – participants who opt for no involvement in attendance or assessment criteria;
2. * Statement of Attendance – participants who opt to fulfil attendance criteria only;
3. * Certificate in Tutoring – participants who opt to fulfil both attendance and assessment criteria.

Lynette Bowyer (1987b)
* See Table 2, p. 5

Appendix C

SUGGESTED TEACHING STRATEGIES

A range of suggestions for activities to develop awareness and tutoring techniques are offered below. The following items might be suitable sources to work with:

- video and audio recordings, of actual lessons, or parts of lessons
- classroom, peer, or tutor trainer teaching
- readings from ESL/EFL reference books, and from course notes on matters pertaining to the Australian context, ESP, language information and other course content areas
- ESL/EFL materials and text books
- lesson plans and outlines
- samples of students' written and oral work
- case studies

The various procedures that trainees might use could be:

- lecture
- pair, group or plenary discussion
- demonstration
- elicitation
- written notes
- individual work/homework

Using the sources of input trainees might also:

- locate (eg. where to find information in a grammar book)
- compare (eg. two exercises for teaching the same point)
- prepare (eg. a lesson plan)
- evaluate (eg. the effectiveness of a marking system)
- list (eg. after viewing a video, the number of different ways in which the teacher tested whether the students understood)
- select (eg. which errors to correct from a piece of written work)
- order (eg. a range of graded exercises appropriately for use in teaching a micro-skill such as scanning a text for the main points)
- practice (eg. a technique described in the teacher's notes accompanying a text book)

Ellis 1986, Bowyer 1987

Appendix D

SUBJECT ASSESSMENT

Participants undertaking option (b) * Statement of Attendance or option (c) * Certificate in Tutoring are required to attend 80% of this subject. Only trainees participating in the latter option (c) are expected to undergo assessment. Assessment is both formative and summative. Formative assessment includes three short tasks of a practical nature, such as a lesson plan, or an outline of how certain tutoring materials might be exploited. Each assignment is awarded 20% of the total marks for this subject. In addition, trainees are required to observe an adult ESL class, or classes, totalling a minimum of two hours in duration. Summative assessment, which comprises 40% of the marks for the subject, involves a take-home examination based on knowledge and skills relating to the course content. Trainees achieving 50% or more will receive the rating "pass". As mentioned in the Course Assessment section above, all work to be assessed, and information and feedback relating to assignments and the examination, should be conducted outside formal course time as it affects only participants undertaking option (c).

Teachers who have undergone teacher training are eligible for optional exemption from the last five hours of this subject (Bowyer 1987b).

See Table 1, p. 4

"CATCH THE SPIRIT"

DONNA STEPHENS

An Example of Using Theme Units with Literacy Learners

An "Aha" experience swept through me last Christmas morning when one grandson inflated a small, plastic globe. I had been pondering how to use the Winter Olympics as a theme unit with a literacy class. Using globes, the class could become familiar with the location of countries which would be participating in the Olympics, just 1200 km from our area of British Columbia. After Christmas I dashed to an import store and bought a dozen of the $2 globes. Thus began two theme units which stretched over three and one-half months.

Today I would like to share our "Catch the Spirit" theme units which encompassed the months just before, after, and during the Winter Olympics. Although the example of the "Catch the Spirit" theme was used in a classroom, tips for adapting units to a tutoring situation will be considered in the "Learning to Learn" example with which this first hour will close.

Planning for any theme involves a basic format:

- stating objectives
- considering resources
- designing learning activities
- incorporating literacy skills.

The plan for this session is to "catch the spirit" of theme units by hearing about the Olympic unit first. Secondly, to consider the theory of theme units; then to relate theme unit use to whole language approach. Fourthly, we will look at exactly how to develop a theme. An example of a study skill unit "Learning to Learn" will be outlined. This theme is particularly valuable with new students in either a classroom or in a tutoring situation. The session will end with tips for adapting theme units to a tutoring setting.

A bit of background information ... Kelowna, British Columbia, is a town of about 70,000 people. The literacy program is delivered in two formats by the community college. Okanagan College has four campuses up and down the 160 km long valley. Two campuses have literacy classes, but most literacy learning occurs in one-to-one tutoring. Tutors are committed to the whole language approach for new readers; the more experienced tutors use theme units, but most tutors feel more secure concentrating on word decoding and comprehension skills. Adult basic education across the province is committed to a theme unit model for all levels of upgrading through high school completion.

But back to "Catching the Spirit" of the Winter Olympics. During January we began learning activities. We began familiarizing ourselves with the continents of the Northern Hemisphere. Each week names of the countries of one continent were listed. Each morning the eight students gathered around a big table, locating the countries on their globes, sorting flashcards with country names, or alphabetizing the words. The interaction of people helping each other was heartwarming and very consistent with the reality of how most of us learn. The physical closeness, the willingness to help and be helped were part of the unstated and unwritten objectives of this theme unit.

Other learning activities involved comparing word configuration and similar parts of the names. We listened for long vowel sounds. All the activities led to the names becoming part of their reading sight vocabulary. One continent per week was studied. On Friday students each sorted out the names they had learned. There was no pressure to learn all the names.

Words like continent, country, boundary, hemisphere, ocean, Equator, and continent names were now being used with ease by students.

The study of Europe began with a discussion of the ethnic roots of students. Canadians still identify closely to their relatives who immigrated only one or two generations ago. Names of Mid-Eastern countries were quite familiar due to the frequency with which the words are used on TV and radio. The week spent on Asia began with considering whether anyone had Asian neighbours.

One day one of the men burst into the class saying, "Did you hear? Jamaica is going to have a bobsled team! We know there isn't any snow in Jamaica!" One of my objectives for the unit had been accomplished: Jim recognized the incongruity of Jamaica having a bobsled team in the '88 Winter Olympics! He had "caught the spirit" of our month-long look at the Northern Hemisphere continents.

The four objectives for the January theme unit had been:

- students would recognize how much they already knew about countries
- they would become more familiar with the names of the countries
- they would have had an opportunity to locate countries on a globe
- they would be able to read some of the names of Northern Hemisphere countries and continents.

Two of the objectives for the February Olympics unit were:

- students would learn the names of Canadian athletes
- they would learn the names of the various events.

Students began to "catch the spirit" as the route of the Olympic torch was traced across a map of Canada. A field trip to see the torch pass from a 12-year old girl to a 76-year old runner in our town brought a thrill to our backbones and tears to our eyes. One would have had to be quite callous not to be caught up by the spirit of the crowd and the music of that occasion. The flame was carried back to the classroom with souvenir torches and miniature flags. Another objective had been met: a goal of having students share an experience with millions of other Canadians.

Other learning activities involved using TV guides to plan nightly TV watching. Charts were made of medal winners in all events. Stories were dictated about the athletes students would most like to meet. "Eddie the Eagle" caught the imagination of everyone and led to very sophisticated discussions of sportsmanship and the spirit of the Olympics. Other discussions centered around drug use by athletes and national pride. Travel routes, schedules, and costs from our city to Calgary were other learning activities. Again, most of the learning objectives involved viewing, listening, and speaking, with only a few reading and writing activities. Fridays found the students playing Rummy with cards made up with symbols of the Olympic events.

Part of the basic format of any theme unit is to look at the resources available. Resources can be people and places, as well as audio-visual and printed materials. Our "Catch the Spirit" unit was helped by a special edition of MacLean's, a Canadian news magazine. Colorful photographs were thus available for bulletin boards; newspapers provided headlines to use as names of gold, silver, and bronze medalists were organized. Free TV guides presented a challenge to decipher the grids, numbers, and words.

Printed resources to use with literacy students are very limited, as every instructor in every country knows. However, depending on the degree a whole language experience approach is used, more written materials can be developed. My choice is to use people, places, and audio-visual materials for theme units with literacy students.

Many of the learning activities have already been described, but just as some

special introductory activity should kick off the theme unit, some special closure needs to be planned. Ours was to watch the movie, Chariots of Fire.

The Theory of Theme Units

The theory of theme units is that the topics capitalize on the experiences and strengths of adult students. Through speaking, viewing, and listening activities, concerns of adult students about their families, their jobs, and their community can be used as a foundation for learning. Theme units are a technique for improving coping skills and critical thinking; a technique for empowering learners.

Themes can replace old memories from previous schooling by involving the adult in a new process; a process wherein the learner helps shape the learning activities and topics explored. Theme units provide an opportunity to deal with real-life concerns, to share the dynamics of group trust and tolerance, and to add vitality to a classroom or in one-to-one tutoring.

Units often develop because of what students express as concerns in their lives. A parent who isn't able to read the notes sent home from school with a child has high motivation to learn how to read those notes; that same parent is highly motivated to provide the best home learning environment for a child. Those concerns could lead into a unit about how learning occurs in children and adults, and how to facilitate learning success.

In the case of the "Catch the Spirit" Olympic unit, considering the Olympics as a timely topic which could be used to advantage was a matter of professional experience. My hope was to have students feel a part of the larger context, to feel a part of the world pictured on their TV screens. I hoped they might connect with the emotions and realities of people in other parts of our spaceship Earth.

Quite a bit of energy has been generated recently around E.D. Hirsch, Jr.'s book *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know.*[1] Hirsch published a list of nearly 5,000 culturally relevant words and phrases he insisted every student should know.

My concern about cultural literacy includes a conviction that one needs an awareness of literature, of events, of folklore, of music, of levels of language, and of the origins of words. Only through being "clued in" to all of these, can we appreciate a multicultural society, such as Canada – such as our world. I believe more literacy students can be a part of "what's happening" as they feel less isolated by a lack of basic skills.

Another factor is involved in my advocacy of theme units, which I consider as a broad definition of social studies, or general studies. My social studies background began with an "educational fad", integrated history and geography, when I was in third grade. As a high school student I could not understand history unless I knew about the geography of an area; then I felt I knew the factors which affected human behaviour – the reality which became history. In my first university life, I stumbled upon Gisell's theories of human development and have forever more used that as a meaningful frame of reference. In my second university life, when I returned as a mature student with three children, I found a degree program in social sciences which required no statistics or foreign languages. Anthropology opened vistas for considering cross-cultural studies in child rearing and education – studies of how various cultures prepared and supported their members for citizenship. Therefore, it was inevitable that I would incorporate some variation of social studies in the adult education classes I taught after completing my degree in social sciences.

Following concerns expressed by learners, twenty theme units have been developed by British Columbia instructors and are listed in the second edition of the *Basic Literacy Curriculum Guide and Resource Kit.*[2] A few of these are: The Critical Consumer, Alternatives to Employment, Coping With Government, Family and Tenant Law, First Aid and Home Safety, and Good Nutrition

for Good Health.

The two-year campaign to create awareness of the problems of illiteracy in North America has resulted in literacy training now being less costly to students in British Columbia. Tutoring has always been free, but students in classrooms have had fees which quite overlooked the realities of their financial situations. But financial aid is now available for those who can demonstrate need.

Parenthetically, many Canadian literacy advocates are raising the question of the right to free literacy training for all adults. We are still trying to understand the Charter of Rights which outlines the constitutional privileges of Canadian citizenship. If universal education provides free schooling for children, the unanswered question is whether adult literacy students shouldn't have cost-free opportunities also.

A second result of the two-year literacy awareness campaign may be less desire on the part of literacy students for anonymity. During the time I served as a coordinator of a tutoring program, learners were quite anxious that no one know they had sought and were receiving help with reading and writing; new coordinators are noticing that learners are not worried about that privacy.

Recently B.C. literacy students have had an opportunity to express their concerns at a series of Learners' Conferences. In Kelowna, a one-day meeting was held for learners from up and down the Okanagan Valley. Gasoline allowances were available for those who travelled, lunch was provided; all paid for by provincial grants. Students planned the Learners' Conferences; tutors and instructors served only as recorders of plans and of the day's gleanings. In its initial stages, 15 learners were expected; 45 attended. Concerns were shared about frustration encountered by not being able to read well. Discussions probed the effects on self-esteem and self confidence. The day ended with an agreement to hold a similar gathering again soon.

While recapping the Learners' Conference, one of the students in our room expressed anger at a local radio newsperson for remarks and tone used when discussing literacy on several broadcasts. Following up on that concern, we began a problem-solving process that was our theme unit for the last month of the term. This was an example of capitalizing on an articulated concern of students and using it as a theme.

Theme units integrate a variety of skills around a general idea of topic; the units direct attention and inquiry to a particular subject. The B.C. *Literacy Curriculum Guide* clarifies the differences between a theme unit and a "focused unit". If one focuses on writing a business letter, that would be a skill, a skill involved as a part of a unit on Applying for a Job. Instruction might focus on consonant blends, using words from the word list of a theme unit; that would be an example of a focused skill.

One advantage of theme units are that they are a natural integration of language skills: speaking, writing, listening, viewing, and reading. A second advantage is that students have input into their learning; their experiences, old and new, serve as one of the main sources of information. Theme units accommodate individual differences and can be adapted to various levels within a group. Opportunities open for a wide variety of activities through a variety of media. Themes build flexibility into a curriculum and encourage instructors to develop units which follow student interests. Another advantage is that themes can reflect real issues and concerns of local communities. Themes allow the use of a variety of types of practical reading materials.

Best of all, theme units result in more student interest and enjoyment – and learning. Whereas focused drill concentrates on specific skills, which of course is needed with literacy students, theme units provide content and context for real life.

Theme Units and the Language Experience Approach

The language experience approach provides a basis for working with the realities and experiences of learners in all aspects of language: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and spelling. The learner's own language is the source of words and information. In a program which made full use of the whole language approach, learners would do many activities of reading and writing about theme unit topics. However, with literacy level learners, reading materials are scarce, and writing transcribed from dictation on tapes or dictation done in person is time consuming for instructors or tutors.

Personally, I am hesitant to belabor and dissect student writing, whether transcribed, dictated or written. Perhaps some of my hesitancy harks back to my own experiences with literature, experiences of analyzing and fragmenting stories and poetry until they were dead, until the spirit of life they reflected was dead. So, although the whole language approach lends itself well to theme units, I choose not to use that technique to any great extent.

The model which expresses my approach to theme units involves experiences lived, sights seen, and sounds heard. Expression of these experiences occurs through action, speaking, and for some learners, writing. Reading provides additional input for some literacy learners.

The model from which the theme units in my program arise, in its broadest context, includes input of activities, gestures, symbols, and art. Experience includes the senses of tasting, smelling, and touching. Music, as well as speech, is involved in listening. This broad definition of input evolved as a result of considering aboriginal or native cultures. Output activities are action, speaking, writing, drawing, and composing.

The cognitive process which occurs between input and output activities is of vital concern to me. I am influenced by it when considering objectives for theme units. I believe theme units and whole language approach provide an educational opportunity to broaden the critical thinking skills of literacy students. Through carefully considered questioning or situation setting, learners can be helped to become more skilful at literal, inferential, critical, reflective, and appreciative understandings.

Other Adult Basic Education instructors are concerned with learning activities involving the process of evaluation. In a theme unit "Teaching Basic Literacy Students to Think Critically about Issues in the News" two B.C. instructors have devised an "adjunct grid" with four levels of questions to be considered during various stages of information gathering. This grid reflects the authors' view:

> Comprehension, especially critical comprehension, involves the same processes whether the activity is reading, writing, or listening. The basic literacy student can begin to gather and assess information effectively by engaging in any of these activities, and can build reading skills in the process.[3]

The learning activities outlined in this unit have questions which are identified as literal, interpretative, inferential, and critical. Using such questions, an instructor or tutor can help learners integrate personal experience and knowledge with new input. "Such questions help build a meaningful picture of the issue, and direct thought towards personal involvement and possible action."

If the process of evaluation is included in a model of input and output for information and action, I believe the objectives for a theme unit will deal less with specific literacy skills but more broadly with attitudes which foster more successful coping with the real world. Participation in real issues does not need to be postponed until reading skills improve. Output of speaking, acting, creating, and writing will demonstrate reasoned opinions.

Closure to "Catch the Spirit"
The Olympic Unit

Before we consider how to develop a theme unit, here's how "Catch the Spirit" ended. I'd like to be able to say that a clear-cut closure was brought to a fascinating, educational, etc., etc., etc., unit, but I can't. After the Olympics were over in February, we all felt a letdown. We considered what to do next. One option was to study the Southern Hemisphere continents. Emotions and creativity being somewhat exhausted, no other options were presented. So we began looking at the continents of South America, Africa, and Oceania (as listed in our atlas; meaning the islands of the South Pacific, Australia, and New Zealand).

In considering resources, library books related to the particular continent of the week were brought from the region's juvenile library. Films were ordered for Friday viewing. The learning activities included all the same things we had done for the Northern Hemisphere continents, but we began to use direction words more – north, south, east, west. Browsing through the library books was encouraged, and discussions were based on information gathered from pictures or words. An instructor who had been born in British Guiana came to the classroom to talk about his childhood experiences – food, shelter, and school. This led to curiosity about tropical fruits, so on one of our field trips we shopped for some; the next day we had a great "tasing" event. A seed from a mango was planted, and when I left in late June, a 6 cm sprout could be seen. Students became intrigued with South American sloths. A film about rain forest animals provided an opportunity to see a sloth in motion – very slow motion! (We watched the film a second time just to see this interesting fellow.)

Three weeks were spent studying South America: Africa, the same.

Before beginning to study Africa, a list was made of what students knew about that continent. Then a set of eight questions were formulated; at the end of the three weeks the questions were reviewed. Answers were now available for most of the questions; some remained unanswered.

As African countries were identified, an estimate was made to compare the size and area to British Columbia. Then we studied a table from an atlas and compared the size of our province to the African countries. We checked our estimates, made visually, against the atlas data. This comparison served as the closing activity related to that continent.

Learning about Australia brought up the topic of aboriginal rights, a term familiar to Canadians who hear news about native land claims and aboriginal rights. Films about marsupials interested everyone. We closed by seeing the movie Crocodile Dundee I and formulating a list of myths and realities about Australia.

Coming here to tell you all about this, I wish I could say that we ended with a fireworks and laser beam experience. That was not the case. A more accurate phrase is "we fizzled away". The activities became too much the same; the amount of time spent on each of the last three continents became too long. Everyone needed a change of pace – including myself! So if you find a unit losing momentum – bale out!

However, students in Kelowna hope to find literacy student pen pals from Australia and New Zealand. So if any of you have students who would like to try corresponding with Canadian learners, please see me later.

But enough about "Catch the Spirit" and the theories of theme unit use. "How does one go about developing a theme unit?" you could understandably ask.

How to Develop a Theme Unit

Weeks or months of brainstorming may go on before a theme unit begins to crystalize into a reality. Or a concern may emerge with a learner or group of students which needs immediate attention. In the latter

case, activities may come immediately to mind and can be used; the objectives may formulate themselves as the concern is addressed, or after some resolution to the issue comes about. In either case, brainstorming occurs while you are driving to or from work, while sipping a cup of tea and staring out the window, or while soaking in a hot tub. In some cases, I have had a big piece of butcher paper taped on the wall of my office and I scribbled down ideas whenever they popped into consciousness. I had been tussling with what to do with the Winter Olympics idea when my grandson inflated his plastic globe and I responded "Aha!"

During brainstorming for a theme unit, learning experiences, literacy activities, and skill development will be considered. A balance of active and passive learning experiences needs to be included. Although students often feel secure by repeating activities, the vitality of a topic may suffer from overuse of discussions or films or writing, or whatever. Community resources can be considered in terms of possible speakers or field trips. Brainstorming literacy activities involves considering what kind of writing and reading task can be incorporated. Consideration of what skills will be developed through a unit depends on student needs and instructor expertise.

The B.C. Literacy Curriculum Guide advises:

A theme unit approach views literacy as a life skill, touching and enhancing all aspects of the learner's life. Use the life experience to develop the skill, and the skill to enhance life.

During brainstorming, consideration should be given to what attitudes and knowledge can be involved which will affect the personal growth, development, and effectiveness of literacy students. Formulating objectives follows quite easily from such brainstorming.

With possible objectives in mind for a theme, the next consideration is resources. Resources are viewed broadly. First: People – the students themselves, continuing and former students, family members, friends, and community specialists in music, crafts, art, sports, hobbies, etc. Second: Audiovisual sources – TV, video, radio, films; live happenings such as children playing, art, or aerobic classes, craftsmen demonstrating their skills, etc. Third: Printed materials.

"Learning to Learn" is one of the first theme units in upgrading courses at Okanagan College's Kelowna Campus. This first unit involves study skills. The theme looks at three concepts: how people have learned things in the distant and recent past, how families affect learning, and how techniques for becoming a more successful student can be learned. The insights gained as a result of the unit should be useful to adult and young students.

To arrive at objectives or goals for a "Learning to Learn" theme, attitudes, information, and skills the student would have after a one-month unit were considered. Seven objectives are set for the unit:

- students will appreciate what they already know
- they will appreciate learning done outside and inside schools
- they will recognize barriers to and interruptions of learning
- they will recognize that everyone doesn't learn the same way
- they will become conscious of the internal process when learning is being attempted
- they will respect the courage required and work necessary to try new learning tasks
- they will become conscious of strategies which can be used to learn new things

These objectives involve attitudes and are not skills.

With objectives formulated, the next task is to plan learning experiences. Students are a great source of ideas for learning experiences once a goal is identified. For example, suppose the objective is to learn

whether schooling now is more effective than fifty or one hundred years ago. Students will come up with suggestions to discuss such matters with the older members of their family, neighbors who recall "the good old days of riding seven miles on horseback", or interviewing a former school teacher who now lives in a retirement home. Perhaps the objective is to consider how learning to become a welder differs from becoming a bookkeeper. Again, students will suggest possible activities related to that objective.

For literacy learners, activities will concentrate on talking, listening, and looking.

Allow flexibility for unforseen learning activities as a unit unfolds. Some of the unforeseen and unplanned learning activities which happen are the most delightful and educational.

Plan how to introduce a theme unit so students will have their interest aroused; sometimes their interest is the impetus for a unit. Inflating a plastic globe in our classroom was the introductory activity for the unit we did on Northern Hemisphere continents. A wrap-up or closure activity also needs to be planned; an activity that will be the culmination of the learning, of new knowledge, and of improved skills. A CLOSURE ACTIVITY IS NOT A TEST!

Here is an example of an introductory activity in which you become part of a group who are "Learning to Learn."

- Concentrate on a recent physical learning experience which you have had. Try to recall your feelings and thoughts as you attempted to learn to knit, to run a power tool, to use a microwave, or to play a musical instrument.
- How did your attitudes change from the first bumbling attempt to a later, more successful experience? What emotions did you experience as a novice; later, as an expert?

This process is an example of an introductory activity for a theme unit. Memories of the physical learning experience could be shared with another student or with a tutor. The student becomes involved because the topic involves a personal experience. A song or a picture could serve also as a basis for recalling one's participation in a situation related to a theme unit.

Adapting Theme Units to a Tutoring Setting

When the learning situation is between one student and one tutor or instructor, contracting a plan of action for a theme unit may be helpful. This contract may be formal or informal, but it should indicate agreement reached about activities to be undertaken, skills to be emphasized, and how progress will be evaluated. Specific meeting dates and discussion times should be scheduled. This type of contracting or planning would occur in a classroom also as students suggest learning activities for a theme. Student participation in the planning heightens their interest in the unit.

The community of the student is often a rich source of learning activities when other students are not available in a classroom setting. Instead of sharing and comparing experiences in a classroom, the learner can talk with a friend or a family member outside the school setting. Discussions with family members should not become problematic, but written activities may lead to some difficulties if the family member comments on what has been written, or the way something has been put down. For example, in the Learning to Learn unit, discussing a parent's schooling experiences should not lead to a problem, but if the learner attempts to write a summary and share it with that same parent, the parent might feel the need, and the right, to make corrections.

When a unit is adapted to a one-to-one situation, the opportunities for self-instruction increase. The adult can have more autonomy and feel a new sense of freedom *and* self-esteem as the theme expands, as the adult uses oral skills to unearth new information and ideas.

However, if learning activities focus around only reading and writing skills, the literacy student may encounter too much frustration; learning activities which capitalize on listening, speaking, and viewing build on skills already depended upon.

Another advantage of planning activites for one student can be the opportunity to be very specific to the individual's interests and literacy needs.

Just as preparing to use theme units involves brainstorming and planning on the part of students and instructors, adapting the concept to a classroom or to a tutoring situation requires creativity and breaking out of the "skill-based" curriculum and learning setting. The "process skills required to function in daily life outside a school setting can be most effectively learned and practiced in a broader community context" (Barnhardt, 1979). The context of theme units provides opportunities to learn skills for the real world, skills which will enhance adult students' effectiveness in their family, at work, and in their community.

Notes

1. Hirsch, E.D., Jr. *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* in "Issues '88", *NEA Today*, January 1988.

2. *British Columbia Literacy Curriculum and Resource Guide*, 2nd ed., B.C. Ministry of Education, 1988.

3. Watson, Wendy and Moira Gutteridge *Teaching Basic Literacy Students to Think Critically about Issues in the News* (Inquiries to B.C. Ministry of Education), p. 1.

4. *B.C. Literacy Curriculum Guide*, p. 66.

THE ADJUNCT QUESTION GRID†

USES: The prompts provided by these questions can be used in guiding reading, viewing, listening, and writing, and in oral questions for discussion. Note that although the three stages of comprehension – preparing, monitoring, and reflecting – are sequential, the four levels of comprehension – literal, interpretive, inferential, and critical – are not sequential. Questions from any level can be asked in any order, at any point in the comprehension process.

TERMINOLOGY: The terminology used in the Adjunct Question Grid is based on the "Strategies" section of the *Fundamental Level Articulation Committee Report on Reading*, 1986 ‡.

Pre-reading/preparation: the stage in which the student gathers background knowledge, experience, and vocabulary in preparation for reading, listening, or viewing.

Monitoring: the stage in which the student is reading, viewing, or listening and concurrently checking that he or she is understanding the ideas presented.

Reflecting: the stage following reading, listening or viewing, in which the student assesses the ideas presented and relates them to his or her own needs and aims.

Literal: questions which ask only for facts identifiable at the sentence or single picture level: facts explicit in the information presented.

Interpretive: questions which require some selection or summarizing of facts.

Inferential: questions which require connection of the ideas given to other ideas or events not yet related or not mentioned at all – for example, prediction of other events made likely by the facts already presented.

Critical: questions which require the

† Wendy Watson and Moira Gutteridge

‡ See list of Resource Material at end for details.

reader to connect personal attitudes and aims with the ideas presented – does the reader agree or disagree with the ideas read? Why? What would the reader want to do personally about this issue? Note that this expects the reader to be "critical" in the sense of remaining objective and assessing the reasons, not to be "critical" in the sense of simply expressing a negative or purely subjective opinion.

THE GRID: Two copies of the grid are provided: one blank, which can be copied by the instructor and used to prepare questions in advance for a particular issue, and one grid filled in with illustrations of sample questions at each level.

ADJUNCT QUESTIONS GRID - SAMPLE QUESTIONS

These questions can be used for all information-gathering processes: reading, listening, or watching; and they can be used for self-questioning as well as for instructor prompts and group discussion.

STAGE of information-gathering	LEVEL OF QUESTIONING			
	LITERAL LEVEL	INTERPRETIVE LEVEL	INFERENTIAL LEVEL	CRITICAL LEVEL
	sample prompts	sample prompts	sample prompts	sample prompts
PREPARING (focussing/ determining purpose for activity)	*What do I already know about this topic?* *What is the head-line? (newspaper) What is the lead sentence? (news broadcast) What is the title? (article)*	*What is the main idea?*	*Why is this topic in the news now?* *What do I expect to find/hear in this article/news-cast?*	*How do I feel about this topic? Why do I feel that way?* *Why is it worth my time to find out more about this topic?*
MONITORING (evaluating current level of understanding)	*Am I understanding what I am reading/ hearing/seeing?* *What does this say?*	*What are the main ideas so far? (in my own words)*	*How does this relate to what I already know?* *What might happen next?*	*Do I agree with what is being said? Why (or why not)?*
REFLECTING (evaluating comprehension in retrospect; planning next related activity)	*Did I understand what I just read/ heard/saw?* *What new facts have I learned from this?*	*What was the gist of what I read/heard/ saw? (summarized in my own words)*	*How is this issue likely to develop?* *What might happen next?* *What possible choices of action might there be?*	*How do I feel as a result of what I read/ heard/saw? Why do I feel that way now?* *Has my opinion about the topic changed in any way?* *What should be done about this issue? Why?*

ADJUNCT QUESTIONS GRID *

STAGE of information-gathering	LEVEL OF QUESTIONING **			
	LITERAL LEVEL	INTERPRETIVE LEVEL	INFERENTIAL LEVEL	CRITICAL LEVEL
PREPARING				
MONITORING				
REFLECTING				

* It is particularly important to remember that these levels are *not* sequential: they should not be use in order from left to right. Any question from any level may be asked at any time in discussion.

** "Teaching Basic Literacy Students to Basic Literacy Students to Think Critically About Issues in the News" Wendy Watson and Moira Gutteridge. (Inquiries to B.C. Ministry of Education; Victoria, B.C.).

READING, WRITING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

JEANETTE THIERING

Reading and writing are greatly overlooked in the teaching of basic mathematics to adults. If maths is viewed as merely calculations, just the manipulating of numbers to obtain previously decided correct answers, then there is little connection between it and reading and writing. We now know that such maths is but a hollow shell compared to the richness of maths learnt through problem solving and mathematical reasoning; through the integration of the verbal, numerical and spatial aspects of this exciting subject; and through the expression of imagination and creativity.

Let us consider some of the relationships between reading, writing and maths in one area only – problem solving. When people are faced with a problem that requires them to organise their thoughts and develop some strategies in preparation for solving it, the way the problem looks is going to affect their reaction to it. This "look" of a problem is of course closely related to reading – either print or spatial images or a combination of both. If I were to offer a group of people a choice of several problems from which to choose one and only one to solve, there would be several factors that would influence them.

How about these problems? Which one would you choose to do?

1. Draw a picture to show how you can arrange 6 coins in 3 straight rows with 3 coins in each row.
2. If a square has been folded in half so that it is now a rectangle, and its perimeter is now 12 metres, what is the length of the side of the original square?
3. How many 1 cm cubes does it take to build cubes which have edges of 2 cm, 3 cm, 4 cm, and 5 cm? In each shape that is built, how many of the 1 cm cubes are completely hidden from sight?
4. An ice block and a lolly together cost $1. The lolly cost 10 cents less than the ice block. What did they each cost?
5. What is the next number in this set?
   0 1 1 2 3 5 8 13 __

   Would you select the one with plenty of numbers? Did you read all the items quickly and predict that one of them would not be your choice at all. Maybe you didn't like any of them! Would it have been better if one of them was more familiar, such as:
6. If the mark-up is 40% what is the recommended retail price of a refrigerator which is $500 wholesale?

   Some people would reject that one because they don't like working with percentages. The point I am making is that the context of a question can attract or repel us. When teachers write or select problems for students to work on, they must be aware that the context really matters.

Long ago I used to read to young students passages from an interesting old book, *Number Stories of Long Ago*, (Smith, 1919). Here is one story:

A mule and a horse were carrying some bales of cloth. The mule said to the horse, 'If you give me one of your bales, I shall carry as many as you.' 'If you give me one of yours,' replied the horse, 'I shall carry twice as many as you.' How many bales was each carrying?

I have used this mathematically intriguing story in many classes, but it has to be rewritten in new settings almost every time, say with husband and wife meeting each other outside a supermarket, or two children going on a hike. The number puzzle gains in appeal for the students if they can identify with the context. An unfamiliar context with an ass talking to a horse is best avoided.

There are four commonly recognised steps in problem solving:

> get to know the problem,
> choose what to do,
> do what you have decided to do,
> look back.

The first question for the maths teacher has to be, Can the students read the question? Perhaps it is in language that is beyond their reading level, or it contains unfamiliar words or technical terms. Maths teachers use a particular style in writing maths questions which is hardly ever met anywhere else – a sort of maths register. Do the students know how to cope with this register? It is the teacher's responsibility to present questions that students **can read**. Some teachers have tried to overcome the literacy issue in mathematics by removing as many words as possible, or preparing worksheets with numerals only, but that has a counter-effect. The students are exposed to fewer words and have more limited experience in interpreting them, resulting in less skill and more anxiety.

I once gave help to a student who could not process a series of problems because they all contained the word "prior". An Arabic speaking person, she kept trying to pronounce it as "prore" which she had never heard anyone say, and was therefore unable to go on. A number of reading problems in maths are as simple as this; others are more complicated. As a harder example, it is very difficult for Asian students, with poor skills in handling prepositions in English, to read questions where the whole maths process depends on the difference between 'to', 'from' and 'at'. Some poor readers, or students who dash through their maths, will always read 'of' as 'off' and go ahead to take away the 20% in this item:

> What is 20% of $1000?
> (..."off $1000")

Their answer will be $800 and the unaware teacher will mark their maths wrong when the trouble is with their reading.

In an extensive study of why a group of Victorian Year 6 pupils made errors in a maths test, Ann Newman (Newman, 1977) found that "for approximately 35% of the 3002 errors made by the low achievers the pupils failed to arrive at a point in their attempted solutions where they could even begin to apply the relevant mathematical knowledge, skills or principles." That is, they could not perform step 1 of the four steps in problem solving because of reading difficulties. Newman concludes that teachers should not assume that errors on written mathematical tasks are always due to mathematical difficulties. For some students the literacy task will be the stumbling block over half the time.

Now that problem solving is taking a greater proportion of the maths curriculum the place of reading is even more important. Let's go back to the four steps.

Step 1: Get to know the problem.
Many students cannot understand the technical words, or the common words, in order to make the translation needed for Step 2.

Step 2: Choose what to do.
This step is usually rushed into as a hangover from the days when speed was so very important in maths.

Step 3: Do what you have decided to do.
This step is impossible without Step 2. Unfortunately it is frequently entered into without Step 1, and without Step 2 being given enough time.

Step 4: Look back.
This is the really important step, not to be neglected. It has a basis in the thinking that accompanies Steps 2 and 3 during which students should be starting to predict what the answer might be.

Ways of working in Step 4 do not need to be stereotyped or boring. They include asking:

Am I right? Is that what I thought the answer would be?

If not, have I made a terrible mistake? I might have made a small careless error.
Is there another possible answer? Perhaps someone else in the group has a different result?
What have I ever seen that was very much like this, or very different, or exactly the opposite?

In practical terms the best routine for Step 4 is to write out the answer in the words of the question, i.e. "the answer in words". Many students benefit from reading "the answer in words" aloud to themselves or to a mate. The writing of the answer in the words of the item is not easy for some: it may need a process writing approach. An essential resource for process writing is a good dictionary. Does your room have a maths dictionary?

All steps in problem solving will result in better understanding of the maths when students are allowed and encouraged to engage in all the language arts in the lesson: reading and writing, and also talking and listening. The common style of maths lesson used to be one in which every student sat silently and the only voices heard were those of the teacher and those students who knew the answers. Literacy and numeracy in the maths group mean that all work is talked about, debates and arguments are frequent and every one practices using the language of maths, first of all, orally.

Other writing activities related to teaching problem solving will be used by the creative teacher, especially one trained to teach both literacy and numeracy. Here are a few ideas.

Writing the 4 problem solving steps in other words reinforces what the steps are and extends the maths vocabulary.

Students may make up their own problems either freshly from their experiences of life, or to match a number sentence provided for them by a fellow student or the teacher. Another trigger for this activity may be a diagram, a photograph, a newspaper article or an advertisement. When students create these problems they "own" them in a real sense. The activity may begin in brainstorming in a group, followed by selecting the best suggestions and recording them. Process writing, conferencing – whatever label is used, the product will achieve better maths.

Writing out in words how a problem was solved is very demanding. Some teachers would find it challenging too, especially trying to avoid ambiguous statements and to stick to Plain English!

Newspapers are a great resource for problems which have a familiar context – and most people like reading the paper. In country towns there is added interest because so many items affect the students personally. Let us think about newspaper advertisements. Students can look at car sale ads and guess what they would actually pay after bargaining – a good estimating exercise. They can write simulated ads for something they might want to sell and work out what they stand to gain or lose. The Sunday papers offer resource material for a project like planning to furnish a room. When it comes to statistics, a real-life area that is too often neglected, then you can use the weather to do graphs of actual and average readings, conduct a survey of the group's TV watching habits; or find the probability of winning lotteries or Lotto, etc. The real estate ads do not comfort us when prices are rising, but the phenomenon of increases compared to a previous standard price is readily studied. We shouldn't stay with number work only. There is also the chance to make scale maps and reinforce geometry and measurement concepts and skills using ads for houses, land and farms..

In all these areas, maths problems are able to be as sexist and racist as any other part of human communication. This must be vigorously avoided. More subtle is the tendency to write all problems in a mono-cultural style: buying expensive goods, going on a long holiday, using only Anglo-Saxon names and urban settings, being generally steeped in the acquisitive, materialistic culture of the middle class people who write maths books. If students write their own word problems,

multicultural contexts will result and teachers will learn from their students yet again.

There is a much forgotten stage in the teaching of problem solving: evaluation. No aspect of maths education is exempt from evaluation, but little is written or talked about it in connection with problem solving.

Consider this strategy for individual assessment of how well a student is handling problem solving. First of all the teacher needs to collect a set of graded problems with different types of solutions. These should be kept just for assessment events.

Before students start to work on a problem, they are asked to read it aloud, then explain what they think it means, followed by presenting a written answer. Finally they are asked to reflect on what they think of their result – if they get that far. Each of these four parts of the process can be evaluated by using a scale and filling in one segment to show, say, the percentage of the words correctly read aloud. It may be 70-80%, so the second last segment would be shaded.

Use 4 scales, one for each skill:
reading aloud,
explaining the meaning,
writing an answer,
looking back.

Then use another scale for assessing the general level at which the student is working. This could be summed up as:

how this problem is handled by this student.

These suggestions are not meant to be taken as a regular requirement of the teacher who is committed to teaching problem solving. They are an attempt to face up to an assessment task that is usually neglected in this area of maths teaching.

Finally, we can have a picture of adult students who look forward to maths lessons because maths is clearly part of the wider education process in which they are presented with problems, some of which they themselves have brought to the group, some of which they have devised within the group and some of which are imposed on them by an outside authority like the teacher or the text-book, or even the government. They approach the problems using all their language skills, ranging from quiet reading to vigorous discussion. They know that it is more important to work out how to go about solving a problem than to actually perform the solution, and that a problem solving task is not complete until they have reflected on what resulted.

Such mathematics teaching enables adults to take charge of their learning.

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"MAKING THE BAND AIDS STICK"

Maree Bentley

Assisting students with literacy problems in the Australian Traineeship Scheme.

For those of you who might be wondering what band-aids have to do with literacy, let me explain. In vocational courses at TAFE it seems very logical to tackle the literacy problems of students before they undertake their courses and not during. It is said by many that students cannot be expected to cope with the content of their courses and with improving their literacy skills at the same time.

When concurrent remediation is adopted, it is frequently referred to as "band-aiding", the connotations being that no real "cure" can be brought about and that, at best, the results are make-shift.

At worst, such assistance "allows" students who might otherwise fail to get through. The cry goes like this: "Do we want illiterate electricians wiring our houses?" and "Do we want illiterate public servants processing our forms?"

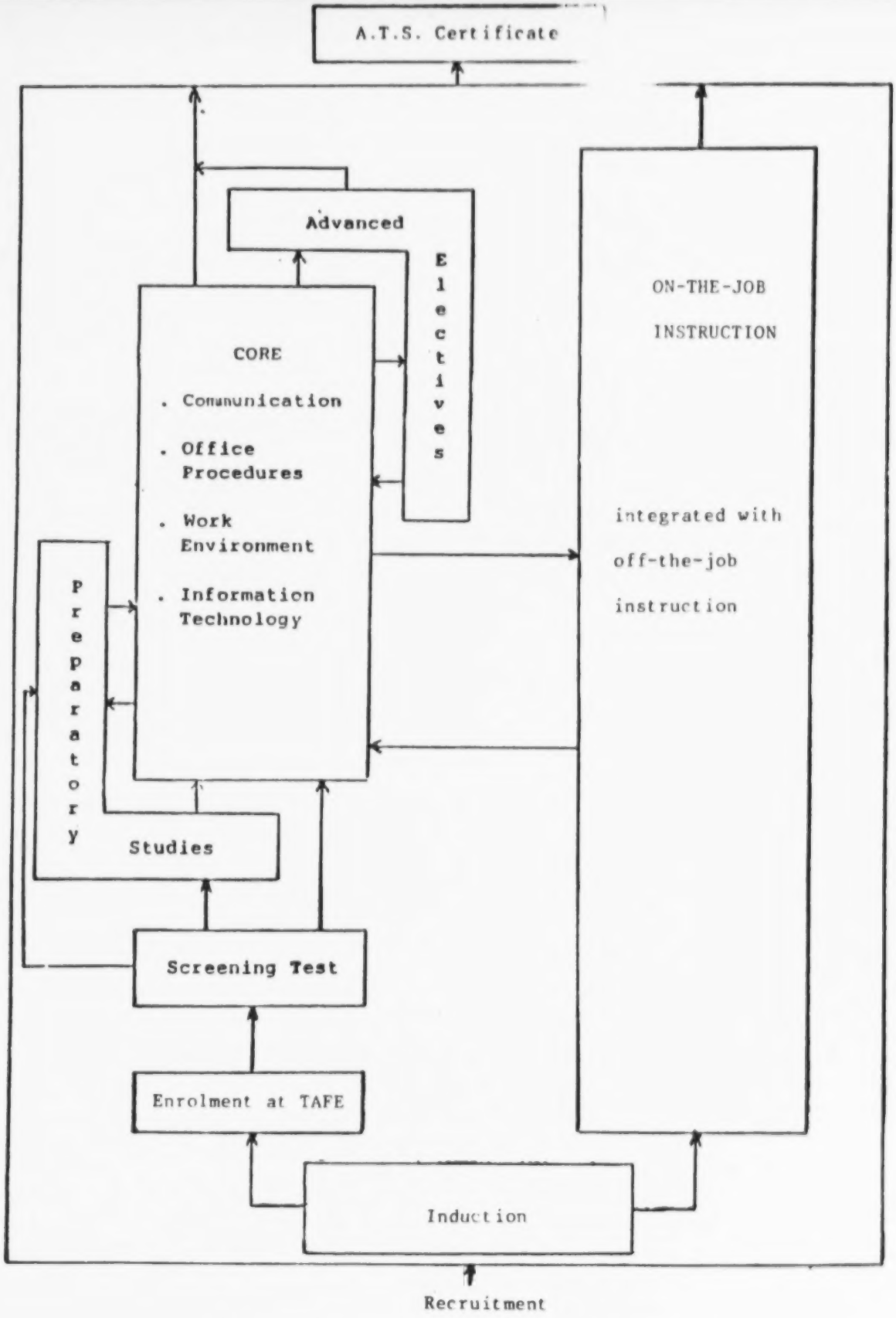
My contention is this: Students learn better by "doing" than by "preparing to do". I would like to convince you that "band-aiding" is no bad thing at all and that, if we can make those band-aids stick, we have performed a functional, efficient, educationally sound and cost-effective service.

I would like to describe to you the way in which we have gone about "band-aiding" one group of TAFE students – those undertaking Australian Public Service Clerical Traineeships. (Refer to Diagram 1)

As many of you will know, Priority 1, the Australian Traineeship Scheme, has not exactly arrived on the TAFE scene unnoticed. Sudden ly, the corridors of TAFE are no longer filled with mature age students who, on the whole, are such a joy to teach. Youth with all its vitality has arrived and TAFE may never be quite the same.

Suddenly TAFE teachers find they need new and different skills. Adolescents who are not quite sure they want to be there, are looking for something that is not like school. Many bring with them techniques well-tried for "trying" out teachers. They seek to be treated as adults but some are not quite ready to get off their skateboards. Many are still in the throes of tackling the all-consuming question: "Who am I?" – a question that demands an answer before much else can be tackled. And to boot, some 15 percent are disadvantaged.

This means some are quite severely disabled; some are deaf, some have co-ordination problems, some are classified as slow learners and others are long-term unemployed youth, bringing with them the damage of that situation. And, of course, many have literacy problems that need to be overcome if they are to have any chance of success.



Diagramatic representation of the Training Plan
for the Australian Public Service Office Traineeship

Diagram 1

One of the major problems in TAFE remedial work is the time scale in which it must take place. The vocational students that basic adult education or intervention teachers deal with have often come to TAFE with a history of special education classes or resource teacher support behind them. This situation is particularly common among the 15 percent disadvantaged group catered for in the Australian Traineeship Scheme.

So we are presented with the problem of "fixing up" or "band-aiding" a student in an hour or so a week when perhaps 10 years of schooling, sometimes with specialist assistance, has done little. It is quite a problem but fortunately, we do have a few things going for us.

Firstly, trainees, like apprentices, are being given a great opportunity and, once you get past the adolescent front, you realise that basically they know this. The Traineeship is giving them a real chance at a real job with quality off-the-job training that enhances their prospects of employment success. Most are aware that, if they "make a go of it", their chances of permanent employment are good. This is particularly so from this year in the Australian Public Service Traineeships where now the Traineeships are the only way into the Public Service for 16 and 17 year olds without a Year 12 Certificate.

Secondly, they are older than they were and they are beginning to see the on-the-job relevance of literacy and numeracy skills. On the job (the real world) they are quite anxious about presenting a literate front. At work there is no currency in being disinterested if they are looking for a permanent job. Most see that what they learn at TAFE can be put into action at work immediately and, what they do not know can become a problem for them very quickly. The ability to read and follow directions, to take clear correctly written messages, to write with mechanical accuracy and some fluency, to spell correctly and file accurately are the work tasks of their day.

Put these things together and you have a mind set that, possibly for the first time for some of these young adults, is fertile for accelerated remediation. Nevertheless, the time constraints still remain.

At Bruce College in 1986 we considered the problem. We knew that we were likely to have large groups needing remedial assistance. We knew that some would be disabled, some might be behaviourly difficult and the best teacher student ratio we could get was 1 to 10. We decided to run an initial screening test for literacy and numeracy to identify "at risk" students. Once identified, "at risk" trainees were channelled into a preparatory class which then became, for those students, a prerequisite subject for "Communications in the Workplace". This sounded sensible but after two terms we knew it was not working. What we had created was the classic "vege" class with all the usual resentment and lack of motivation that characterises such classes where students are separated from their peers and prevented from starting everything with the rest. The band-aids certainly were not sticking. Undoubtedly these students were in urgent need of assistance but no matter how relevant or expert that assistance was their attitude prevented them from taking advantage of that assistance. We decided to try another way – to have "at risk" students begin all subjects but to "pinch" some time from keyboarding and run a parallel support tutorial. The basic adult education teacher taking the tutorial would also go into "Communications in the Workplace" for 1 hour as intervention teacher. So instead of remedial work being done before their Communications subject they tackled Communications with everyone else. The support tutorial was used to enable students to undertake individualised remedial programs tailored to their needs and based on diagnostic assessment to make sure no time was wasted on their working on someone else's problems.

It started to work. The adult preparatory teacher was in the position of setting up and implementing an individual program for the student and, as well, observing and working with the student in the

mainstream subject. Transfer of skills learnt could be reinforced in both areas. The Communication teacher could be assisted by the basic adult education teacher's knowledge of the student's strengths and weaknesses. Work found difficult in Communications could be followed up and problem areas tackled via the student's individual program. This two-way process greatly assisted the disabled students; for example; the special learning needs of hearing impaired students could be brought to the attention of the Communications teacher by the intervention teacher.

Having the organisational structure finally working we could turn our attention to refining our screening and diagnostic assessment. This assessment has two parts: an initial screening test and a series of diagnostic exercises. The initial screen consists of three parts: a cloze reading exercise, a writing sample and the Shorter Clerical Test. This screen testing is done at enrolment.

On the basis of this screen testing, trainees with possible literacy problems are identified and channelled into the parallel support tutorial to work on individual programs tailored to their specific literacy needs.

Once the students are in the class, the second stage of diagnostic assessment takes place. This consists of a diagnostic spelling test and exercises in listening, alphabetical order, dictionary skills, sentence and paragraph construction, reading comprehension and proofreading.

In addition, students who have scored poorly on the cloze passage in the screen testing are taken through an informal prose inventory and a miscue analysis is done to identify productive and unproductive reading strategies. On the basis of this collection of data, a program incorporating group and individual work is designed for each trainee.

In some intakes of trainees, we have had groups of students with similar problems evident in their profiles.

In one such group, the diagnostic spelling test revealed a group of students whose errors showed an over-dependence on phonics at the expense of meaning elements. With this group of students we used a "super-learning" or accelerative learning approach based on work done by Tony Bennett with students with severe spelling problems in the New England Educational Diagnostic Centre. However, we placed more emphasis on meaning based elements of words than Bennett. Like Bennett we noticed an improvement in strategies as well as a gain in spelling accuracy of words dealt with. In another group with uniformly very poor performance on the cloze reading test, we began most sessions with what might be described as "mass silent read-along", contradictory as that may sound. The material we used for this was, in the main, newspaper articles high in human interest. Although the reading level of the material was too difficult for students to handle independently, as a supported reading exercise the approach paid dividends in terms of enhancing prediction skills, acquiring vocabulary, improving knowledge of sight words and providing background for discussion leading into writing exercises. A valuable spin-off for students is the background information to be able to discuss with family and peers issues and items of current interest. Diagnostic exercises and analysis of writing samples identified groups who need to work on paragraphing or sentence structure problems.

But on the whole, the work done in these classes is individualised and self-paced. Each student operates from two folders – one containing the individual program, the student profile and the work for the day; the other, a holding folder for work done, always available for reference. Students are encouraged to write their comments on work given and assess their own progress. Student's programs are constantly adjusted in the light of these comments and their progress on work done.

In these clerical traineeships both employers and trainers attach considerable importance to being able to spell well.

Many of the trainees that we have had through our program have had severe spelling problems which we have sought to remediate using a diagnostic approach. Our diagnostic spelling test gives clear directions for work on various spelling patterns. This work is tackled systematically and revised periodically. As well, each student has a personal spelling error analysis sheet in his/her program folder. On this sheet both student and teacher enter any words spelt incorrectly in any writing done. Students are encouraged to analyse their errors and come up with memory devices to assist correct future spelling. Students are tested regularly on their personal lists.

If reading levels are low, programs are based on data gained from miscue analysis or analysis of-not-exact replacements in cloze exercises. These tools are also used for monitoring progress. Programs may include, for those readers overrelying on graphophonic cues, readalong exercises using recorded material, cloze exercises (some on computer), and exercises stressing prediction and confirmation strategies. With such readers metaknowledge of the reading process is emphasised. Discussing with them how reading really works seems to do a lot in moving them towards the use of more productive strategies.

At the other extreme, readers whose total disregard for graphophonic cues leads them to great difficulties in clerical tasks need work to balance the various cueing systems. We find, on the whole, a writing approach will focus attention sufficiently on print but, with some students, work on such aspects as syllabification and structural analysis can assist.

With writing, problems are tackled on two fronts – element and macro levels. Students work on identified weaknesses such as sentence structure, paragraphing, punctuation, faulty syntax etc. Concurrently, however, they work on producing several pieces of writing via a process writing approach. Students work through brainstorming, planning, drafting, conferencing, redrafting, editing, proofreading, and the presention phases of the writing process.

Every student does these writing tasks as this work is our main source of ongoing identification of problem areas and our means of monitoring progress. Because students have a free choice of writing topics, we can often integrate reading material of interest to them with their writing tasks. For example, this term one student chose "euthanasia" as one of his writing topics. We were able to provide source material from current newspaper articles and the student learnt the valuable skill of how to incorporate source material into his writing.

A main reason, however, for our emphasis on writing is that it counterbalances the isolated skills approach that the individualised diagnostic-based approach can easily lead to. Any skills exercises done come off students' own writing; they are not done in isolation. In most cases the students see the relevance and are quite prepared to work on the problem area.

This term we have been able to arrange for students to type up their writing on the word processor as soon as their keyboarding skills are sufficiently developed. (For those behind in their keyboarding skills, teachers type up writing). This has proved a wonderful boon - students can tackle redrafting from a clean typed copy; eventually the piece becomes a medium for learning proofreading skills - a skill which, incidentally, causes many trainees major hassles in the Office Procedures subject in the course.

The work, as you can see, is intensive and exhausting. Working on an individual basis with a 1 to 10 teacher/student ratio, particularly with some of the students disabled, is a very tall order. We could certainly do a better job with a reduced teacher/student ratio and with time release to have a decent "go" at materials development.

Nevertheless, with each new intake we take through, we see exciting possibilities

and new directions for assisting and supporting these students. As we gain experience with TAFE's newest clientele and gradually produce a range of materials appropriate to the age group and vocational needs of these students, the task becomes possible. We are greatly assisted in this task at Bruce College by a more flexible and hard working Traineeship Department dedicated to the aim of producing a quality off-the-job training program. This enables us to evolve and develop effective remedial methods and organisational structures for "at risk" trainees.

Although there is still a long way to go, we now have the great pleasure of seeing many of our "at risk" trainees successfully completing their traineeships and entering the workforce with greatly enhanced literacy skills and self esteem. For these trainees the band-aids have stuck long enough to serve their purpose.

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TWO MINUTES FROM EXPERIENCES OF LITERACY CAMPAIGN IN THAILAND

TONGYAO KAEWSAIHA

In order to start the national literacy campaign in Thailand we have taken into account the following steps:-

Firstly we have raised the public awareness by all means of mass media showing that illiteracy is the obstacle of the nation's development. It is not the personal problem or particular group's problem. It is a problem of our country as a whole. With this attempt, the national literacy campaign project was included in the Fifth National Economic and Social Development Plan and the government policy was announced that literacy is the basic minimum need – that Thai citizens have the right to be equipped free of charge.

Secondly, we have tried to get involvement and commitment from the government. The Prime Minister was very supportive of the national literacy campaign. He had several meetings with all ministers and provincial governors in order to monitor the program. He, himself, went to the ceremony presenting tokens and certificates to the governors, district officers, community leaders, monks, NGO's representatives who contributed significant parts to the project. He donated good books for villagers and even went to visit some learning groups in rural areas.

Thirdly, we have got involvement from all government and non-government agencies who employ extension workers in the villages. We involved them at the beginning as members of the advisory committee which was chaired by the provincial governors. By this strategy, the literacy campaign, then, belonged to their own project.

Fourthly, we motivated local governments and other local organizations such as primary school teachers, monks, house-wife organization, youth groups to be co-ordinators and conduct a survey of the illiterates in their villages. These co-ordinators or organizers also took responsibility to identify and motivate literates in the villages to be volunteer instructors.

Lastly, the campaign aimed to mobilize all literate family and community members to serve as organizers and instructors. Anyone who can read and write was eligible to volunteer regardless of age, sex, educational background. However to increase the learner-instructor relationship, the campaign encouraged family members or close neighbours to serve as instructors. The illiterates, therefore can learn at their own pace and convenience. It also reduced campaign operating costs significantly. The campaign also got involvement from other resources such as policemen, movie stars, singers, music organizations etc., to guarantee our program succeeded. Finally and critically, it provided an opportunity for people from all walks of life to participate in and develop a sense of commitment to the campaign and its goals.

BEGHILOS and the Pig Pr

CHERRIE HAWKE

Literacy and numeracy are perfect partners in the real world. Their separation in teaching is sometimes convenient but always artificial.

Beghilos is a fun activity which links literacy and numeracy in a creative way.

There are eight numbers which, when displayed on a calculator and turned upside down, closely resemble letter of the alphabet. They are 8, 3, 6, 4, 1, 7, 0 and 5. Some say that the number 2 can represent z when inverted, but in this case there is enough difference to cause confusion for students, so it is better to omit it.

Crossword puzzles are constructed using only these words. The clues for each puzzle will contain word clues and number calculations. When the answers to the calculations have been found on the calculator they are inverted and the resulting words should match the word clues. The words (not the numbers) are written in the puzzle.

BEGHILOS puzzles are fun to make and share. Unusual words may be chosen because the number calculations give the answers and if there is doubt, the words can be checked in a dictionary.

Literacy and numeracy skills are used in the construction of puzzles. Words need to be created, checked in the dictionary and then meanings recorded. Then a mathematical sentence must be constructed to match, and checked with a calculator. There is also a deal of thought required in actually constructing the crosswords. The resulting puzzles can be shared with others or collected together in a book.

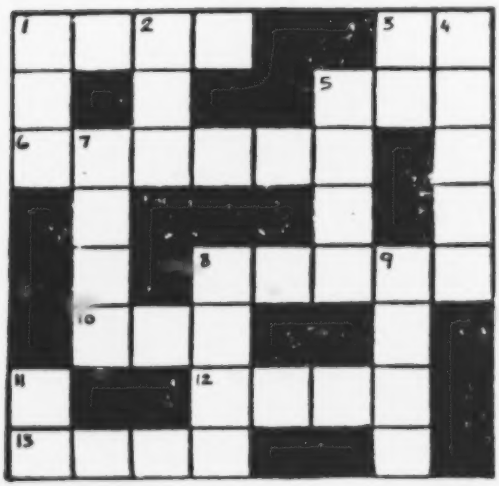
The only restrictions are that:

(1) the size of the display screen on a calculator will only show words of up to 8 letters

(2) words beginning with "O" need extra thought if they also have "O"s on the end because in a decimal calculation, the calculator will automatically omit extra zeros

eg OSLO is represented by 0750 so needs to be 0.750 on the calculator. A calculation will always become 0.75 when = is pressed so the clue may have to be "0.750" rather than a calculation.

A SAMPLE PUZZLE



Across

1. Untruths
   25 × 260 − 1183
3. Therefore
   1 + 2
5. Clothes protector
   536 + 282
6. Eat greedily
   3 788 × 100 + 6
8. Waters
   3 344 × 16
10. O.T. priest
    85 × 2 + 3
12. Opposite of profit
    11 × 500 + 7
13. Part of a window
    390 × 20 − 85

Down

1. Limb
   9 × 70 + 7
2. Flow back
   22 × 40 + 3
3. Yes (Sp)
   45 + 3
4. Musical instruments
   54 × 1 000 − 920
5. Asks for charity
   30 × 20 × 10 − 362
7. Leer
   33 840 + 9
8. Small mountain
   40 × 200 − 286
9. Petrol brand
   553 + 1 000
11. Singular of "are"
    17 × 3

In reading, meaning is composed and modified by input from the reader and the text. If a teacher offers input, the reader will accept/reject it in terms of how well it fits with the overall picture the reader is building. The reader is in charge, solving the reading problem from within. Only input which makes sense is accepted.

Too often in numeracy, the teacher is in charge, the teacher's input is not only accepted but accepted uncritically, and problem-solvers use the teacher for (verbal and non-verbal) feedback rather than relying on their own experience and feedback from the problem itself or its partial solution.

Problem-solving underpins (or should underpin) all numeracy work with adults. Basic skills can be learned and practised in relevant, meaningful situations. Artificial problems which focus on skills for their own sake and have no basis in reality or common sense are not useful.

This does not mean that numbers cannot be investigated for their own sake. A problem such as:

For every number imaginable a sequence can be generated by squaring the digits and adding, then repeating this for each new term formed. For 21; the sequence is
21, 5, 25, 29 .....

$(2^2+1^2)(5^2)(2^2+5^2)(2^2+9^2)$

If such a sequence eventually reaches 1, the number is HAPPY. If not, it is SAD.

INVESTIGATE

practices many basic skills, but can be interesting in spite of the fact that there is no obvious use for the information obtained.

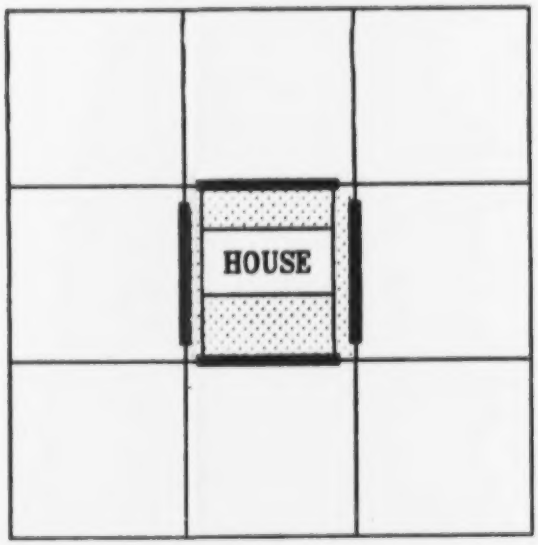
"The pig problem" is more real, but it has in common with the investigation above, one important characteristic:

*there is not **ONE** right answer*

Problems whose solutions depend on a particular point of view, which needs to be justified, or those like "the pig problem" which have more than one solution, are excellent.

Try the problem for yourself. Stand back and look at the number of times adding, subtracting and multiplying occur. Ask yourself if there is some pattern to the way solutions can be found. If you do not own 22 delightful squishy rubber pigs to move around a diagram, use blocks, matches or coins to help. Even if you cannot find a solution after you have thought, manipulated and discussed, ask yourself what kind of learning could occur with this type of problem. Most important of all, ask yourself if you had fun!

The Pig Problem:



A farmer has 22 pigs. He lives in a house surrounded by 8 fields. There is one window in each wall of the house, and three fields can be seen from each window.

One day he notices he can see exactly nine pigs through each window.

Place the pigs in their fields to show what the farmer saw.

ISSUES IN ADULT LITERACY

WHOSE NEEDS ARE BEING MET: STUDENT'S, SOCIETY'S OR INDUSTRY'S?

JAN KINDLER

This paper draws on information gathered in two studies:

(I) a project conducted for the Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council (1986-87) which looked at the level and types of literacy provision in Victoria. This included the gathering of information on staffing levels, the characteristics of adult literacy students, volunteer tutors, etc.;

(II) a preliminary study conducted for the Access Department of Footscray TAFE College (Dec. 1987) which was a needs analysis of the literacy requirements of employees and those participating in a range of community programs.

Whose literacy needs is your program meeting?

To answer this it is necessary to consider who are the students participating in adult literacy programs.

In Victoria it was found that:

(1) 57% of students are male, and
43% of students are female.

(2) The greatest proportion of students were in the 20-29 year age range and that there is a considerable drop off of students over 30 years of age (see figure 1).

(3) In the 15-19 and 20-29 year age range considerably more males than females attended adult literacy programs. At 30-39 years the proportion of males to females was evening out, and after 49 years the proportion of females attending literacy programs was higher (see figure 2).

(4) As can be seen in Figure 3, half of all students worked, 17% were unemployed, 14% were recipients of other benefits and 17% were undertaking home duties. 3% were retired.

It is interesting to note that in Victoria 33% of 15-24 year old adult literacy students were unemployed.

(5) Of those who work 83% are employed in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs.

(6) 52% of adults attending literacy programs had attended school for 7 to 10 years (see Table 1).

Obviously students of different ages, gender, educational level, employment status, etc will have different needs in terms of their literacy requirements, and each student may have a multiplicity of needs. Are programs meeting the needs of such a diverse group of students?

Those workers involved in adult literacy programs should consider:
Who are the students in your program?
What are their literacy needs?
Are their needs being met?
What processes are being used to establish if the needs of your students are being met?

Perhaps some thought could also be given to which groups do not attend adult literacy programs and why they do not attend. One possible reason is that they do not feel that the program will meet their needs.

ADULT LITERACY STUDENTS

Figure 1.

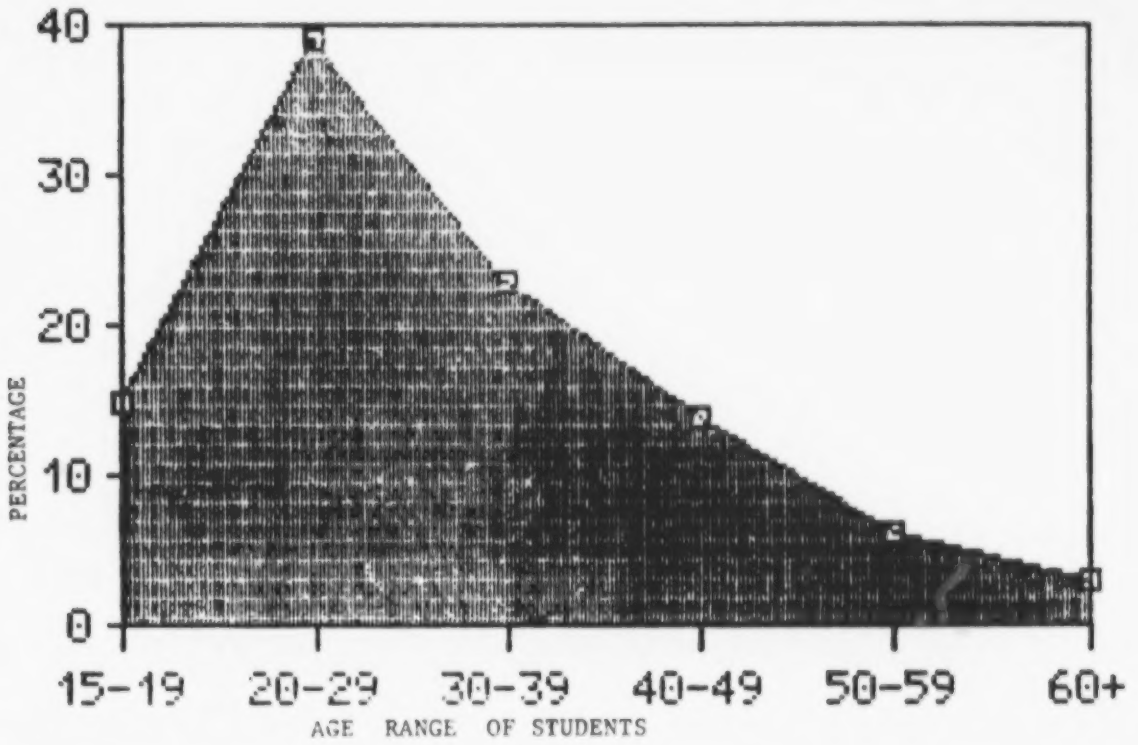


Figure 2.

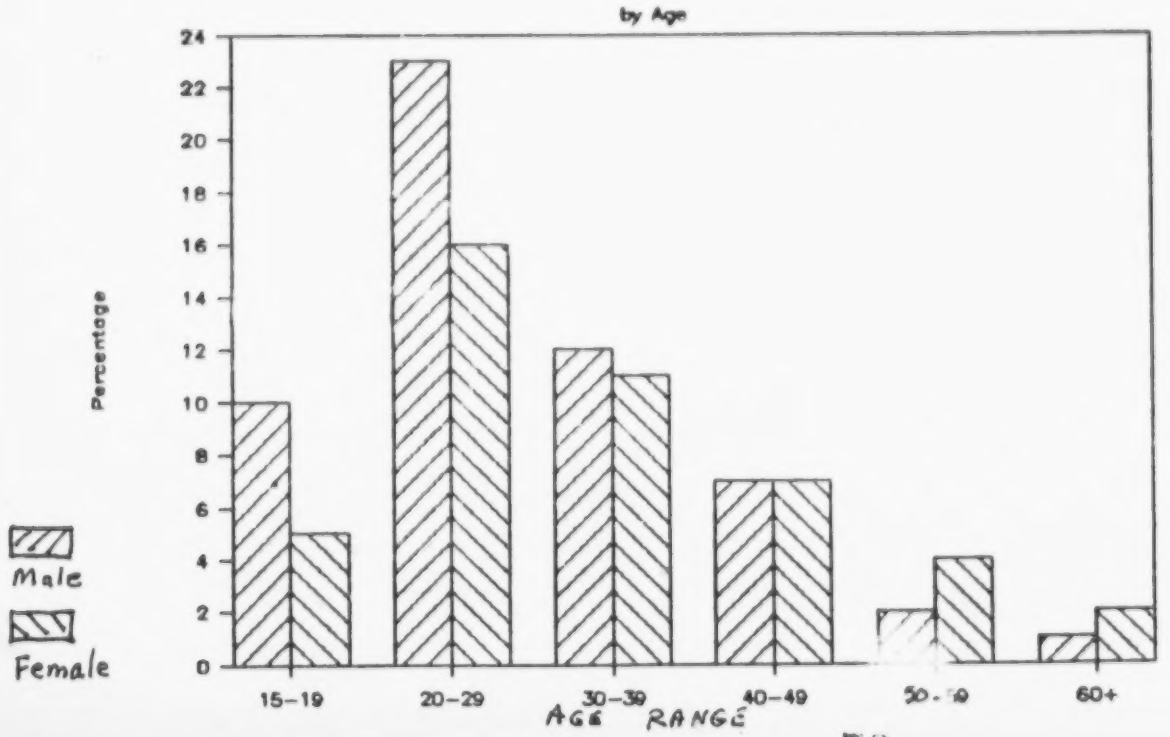


Figure 3.

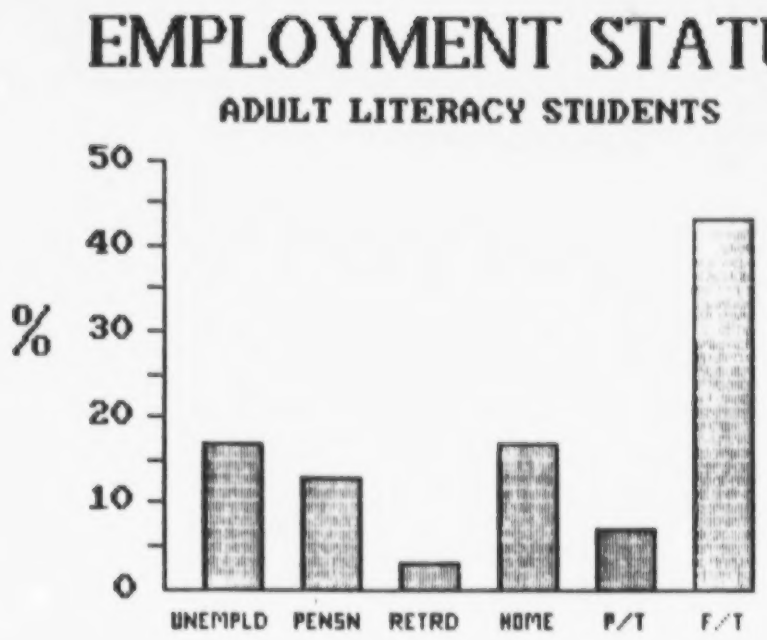


Table 1.

Highest Educational Level achieved by Students

Highest education level of students	No. of Students	% of Students
No Schooling	89	4%
Special School	352	17%
Years 1-6	360	18%
Years 7-10	1061	52%
Years 11-12	137	7%
Year 12+	48	2%
Total:	2047	100%

What are the literacy needs of the community?

Different societies and communities have different literacy requirements. Within the context of our society, deficiencies in literacy skills not only affect the individual but the society as a whole. Examples of these being:

(1) Those people with low levels of literacy are more likely to be dependent on welfare.

(2) Literacy competence is necessary to fully utilise and understand the workings of society's agencies.

(3) Only those people with functional literacy skills can fully and responsibly take part in the democratic process.

(4) A home environment in which reading does not take place is unlikely to fully develop a child's learning ability.

(5) The promotion of cultural understanding, both of your own and other cultures requires some literacy competence.

The literacy needs of the community may be similar to those of the individual. However, there are other tasks requiring literacy skills which do not affect the workings of the community, and as such are not part of the literacy needs of the community, but in which individuals wish to participate e.g. writing shopping lists, putting on a bet at the TAB.

If we looked at only providing for the literacy needs of the community then we would be providing community training rather than an educational activity.

In what ways are your programs meeting the needs of the community?

What are the needs of industry?

In relation to literacy, industry has specific needs which differ from those of the general society. In the main, deficiencies in the literacy competence of workers will diminish the skills of the workforce as a whole.

Specifically a workforce with limited literacy skills will affect the individual and industry in a number of ways:

(1) An individual's advancement within the workforce is restricted.

(2) Those workers lacking literacy skills are restricted in their ability to transfer to jobs in other industries.

(3) Workers who cannot read and understand safety instructions are more likely to be prone to industrial accidents.

(4) Levels of productivity may be restricted by workers with limited literacy skills.

Technological change has affected the literacy requirements of workers in two ways.

(I) Some jobs are becoming deskilled and many workers in factory settings undertake mindless tasks that require no literacy skills. The opportunity for workers in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs to work their way up through the ranks are now extremely limited.

(II) Other jobs, particularly skilled jobs, are becoming more and more complex and highly skilled. There is an appreciation by some employers that for workers to become more skilled they must have a proficiency in literacy and numeracy.

Although it would not be desirable for literacy programs to provide only vocational training it would seem necessary, given the economic climate, that the needs of industry should be taken into account by those working in literacy programs.

In what ways are the literacy needs of industry being met by your program?

Given that the literacy needs of the individual, society and industry do differ, adult literacy programs have to consider whose needs they are meeting, and whose needs they should be meeting.

TRAINING TUTORS FOR ADULT ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER LITERACY/NUMERACY STUDENTS

MARIA LEWIS

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Adult literacy/numeracy programs conducted throughout the Brisbane metropolitan region are community based programs. The main aim of this workshop therefore, was to present ideas, theory and personal experience to the group in an effort to promote discussion and community feedback on what I see as 4 (four) major issues determining the success of Aboriginal and Islander tutor training programs.

MOTIVATION
What motivates someone to be a tutor of A and I students?

MATCHING
Why is matching important?

CHARACTERISTICS OF A AND I LEARNERS
Are there any special learning characteristics that need to be understood?

CULTURE
Where does culture fit into a Literacy/Numeracy program?

MOTIVATION

After the presentation of several student and potential tutor case studies, a lively discussion on the positive and negative motivating factors of potential tutors ensued.

Several important points emerged ...

Negative factors

1. Desire to be 'teacher'?
2. Need or tendency to dominate or direct
3. Intentions to change people.

Positive factors

1. Desire to help on an equal basis
2. Useful relevant experience ... eg: self, relative or friend who has a literacy problem
3. Community awareness and involvement
4. Personal development.

MATCHING

I listed 3 main points for discussion

1. Expectation of students
2. Variance of learning/tutoring styles
3. Importance and relevance of past experiences of student and tutor

All those present agreed that the students' needs and expectations are of paramount importance. Learning styles must be taken into account on an individual basis. The past experiences of each student, as well as tutor, regarding learning, achieving, failure, goals, may be significant in a successful 'match'.

An interesting point was made regarding A and I students' trust in the person responsible for matching. That is, traditionally, only competent and suitable people were assigned teaching or instructing tasks ... the learners accepted the person assigned to them without question. Their trust in the person making the choice of "teacher" was absolute. This is still a recognisably significant feature of modern A and I society. Thus, the person making any matching choices is presented with a great deal of responsibility, as is the tutor trainer. Potential tutors must be made aware of the need for them to recognise any mis-match, in order to avoid a student 'suffering silently', or perhaps blaming themselves for any failure they may experience due to mis-matching, or even dropping out, giving an unrelated reason (or even worse, no reason) for their desire to discontinue.

LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS

The 1978 Arnhem Land research conducted by Dr Stephen Harris, **Traditional Aboriginal Education Strategies** was presented in some detail at the 1981 A.C.A.L. National Conference. I found the six main points of Dr Harris's study particularly relevant to the Adult Literacy field, and of great assistance to

tutors who may not have an Aboriginal or Islander community background. Raising these points often clarifies certain learning preferences of those people wishing to become tutors. In turn, they are more aware of these, often basic, preferences in their students.

1. Observation and imitation
2. Personal trial and error
3. Real life performance, not contrived settings
4. Mastery of context-specific skills rather than abstract context-free principles
5. Orientation to persons, not information alone
6. INDEPENDENCE

Dr Harris relates these findings to traditional learning. I presented them to the group in the context of contemporary adult learning. There was a unanimous agreement that an understanding of these points is of extreme importance to anyone desiring to take on a tutoring role with A and I learners.

As points 1-5 were discussed it was clear that these can relate to literacy and numeracy tutoring in many significant ways. However, point 6 **INDEPENDENCE** emerged as the single most important aspect of A and I learners. An understanding and respect *of* this independence means that tutors must approach *all* A and I students as total individuals. It may be possible to recognise certain relevant and helpful cultural characteristics and learning style preferences in the A and I student, but it is **NEVER** possible to assume those styles or preferences. The discussion on independence recognised several significant points ...

— Students' desire to participate can not be forced.

— Students should not be verbally confronted or embarrassed.

— Limitations and lack of ability should not be shown up in front of others.

— Take care when rewarding success. In a one to one situation reward the student calmly and quietly. Avoid gushes of 'fabulous', 'great', 'you're doing terrifically'. Often body language such as a smile, a wink or a pat on the shoulder is more successful than words.

— Don't force successful students to show-off ability, or take the lead in a group.

— Give successful students the chance to channel their energy back into planning their own program or back into the group.

— Always consider every student as an individual who may or may not display recognisably Aboriginal or Islander learning traits and preferences.

— Never see the A and I students in a cultural 'mould'.

— There are no blanket remedies to an A or I students' learning difficulties.

CULTURE

Just where culture fits into any Literacy program is determined by the student's wishes and the tutors awareness and ability. Discussion on this topic showed that a difference of opinion exists within the community regarding any culturally based programs. The majority opinion at the workshop favoured the introduction of 'culture' in programs, however certain people felt that culture should only be presented to individuals at the family and community level.

Points made in favour of the use of culturally based materials and resources were:

— If the student is interested in culture it is a highly successful SELF-ESTEEM builder.

— It often relates to actual LIFE-EXPERIENCE.

— Provides a wealth of interesting and motivating reading material; discussion points; 'writing sessions';

— Provides access to the external locus of the student ... a significant feature of Aboriginality.

— Demonstrates innate abilities and successes.

— May provide an avenue to work through negative feelings that inhibit participation in mainstream society.

ALICE AND THE MAGIC MUSHROOM or An Adult Literacy Organiser in Townsville

P. BARCLAY

As you have probably guessed by now, my name isn't Alice. However, being a good student of Schema Theory, I thought that I would tap into your vast store of prior knowledge. With sincere apologies to Lewis Carroll – I would like you to remember all the strange situations in which Alice found herself; and I would also like you to conjure up all the stories you have ever heard about mushrooms. Now, please hold those mental pictures; – they are all in here somewhere.

THE FIRST SPORE – Townsville's Literacy Beginnings

As with spores, new knowledge and new realisations often lie dormant for some time before any noticeable change takes place. Thus it was with our Adult Literacy Unit. It had been recognised for some time that literacy provision was a great need uncatered for in our adult community. Although voluntary organisations such as S.P.E.L.D. were doing a great job they were overwhelmed as there was nothing being done through any official educational body. After attending a Q.C.A.L. conference in 1984, the O.I.C. of our Further Education section, in consultation with the Principal, decided to submit for funds to employ a part-time Adult Literacy coordinator. In April 1985 I was lucky to be appointed in that position for 20 hours a week and in 1980 I became full-time.

My original charter was to explore the needs of the adult community, to begin a voluntary tutor group and to arrange classes as far as funds would allow. Having lived and taught in the community for 15 years, I had developed a large network of people in Education and Welfare which was to prove invaluable to me in carrying out this job. I had, however, no experience of tutor training and organisation so I had to rely on a lot of advice by telephone and a great deal of reading. I developed a tutor course which, I felt, would serve our needs and prepared to advertise for volunteers. It was Bowen, though, who were the first receivers of this course as they had a group ready and waiting to be trained. It was baptism by fire for both of us. Their course was run on a Friday night, Saturday and Sunday. They were a wonderful group of people and made my job very easy but I am sure they went away snowed under by paper and with their heads reeling! Townsville had the next course from which we obtained 16 tutors. By then we were also running one Literacy, one Numeracy and one Study Skills class. Due to overcrowding of Tafe facilities, training took place at the Y.W.C.A. hall and teaching of classes took place in the evenings at high schools.

THE MYCELIUM – or the spread continues.

By 1986 we had a classroom within the Tafe Building and had doubled our offering with classes during the day and at night. In addition there were now classes in English as a Second Language, one class each for the visually and hearing impaired, one class for the physically handicapped and Literacy and Numeracy classes out at the prison. My aim was to offer literacy to ALL adults.

During 1987 the classes for the visually and hearing impaired closed due to lack of demand but to replace that I added a class for the intellectually disabled which was teaching Life Skills. The greatest demand was from students of English as a Second Language. This was something I had not anticipated. These classes were doubled yet again and additional subjects were added, these being, English for Academic Purposes and know Your Driving Rules. Voluntary tutors were being trained four

1985

1986

times a year to cope with losses and the expanding demand. By the end of the year there were 49 tutors all working with at least one student, and having taught 1,932 hours between them. This year, it has become increasingly obvious that new funding sources must be explored and that for the purposes of many adults, part-time classes are inadequate. Pressures to upgrade literacy ability in order to find employment seem to be greater than ever. Part-time classes are too slow and are not intensive enough for these particular needs. In order to partly solve this problem, negotiations took place with the C.E.S. resulting in a short ten week course called 'Preparatory Work Effectiveness'. The major part of the timetable involved Literacy and Numeracy skills with the additional topics of Self Development, Introduction to computers, Job Seeking and other social skills. The main aims of this course were to refresh or update Literacy and Numeracy, develop more advanced skills, help students become realistically aware of their capabilities and, above all, put back lost confidence. This was viewed by us as a bridging course between unemployment and further training courses or jobs. In answer to other demands, in the second semester this year, we are offering courses in Advanced English Speaking, Self Development for Migrant Women and Parents as Tutors.

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY – or organisation and aims.

The previous outline of courses only touches the surface of what really happens in the way of organisation. I sat down and wrote a list of what I do, one day and came up with two foolscap pages! During 1986, with all the demands and rapid expansion, I felt like Alice sitting on an ever expanding Mushroom – was it about to eat me? At other times I had the impression that people viewed this section rather as a Mad Hatter's Tea Party. However, although it may not appear so, the Mad Hatter was very well organised, – you will notice that he never had to do any washing up!

The point I wish to make here is, that if a unit is clear about its aims and the organisation is good, the event of outside disruptions, unexpected changes and other hitches can be adapted to more easily.

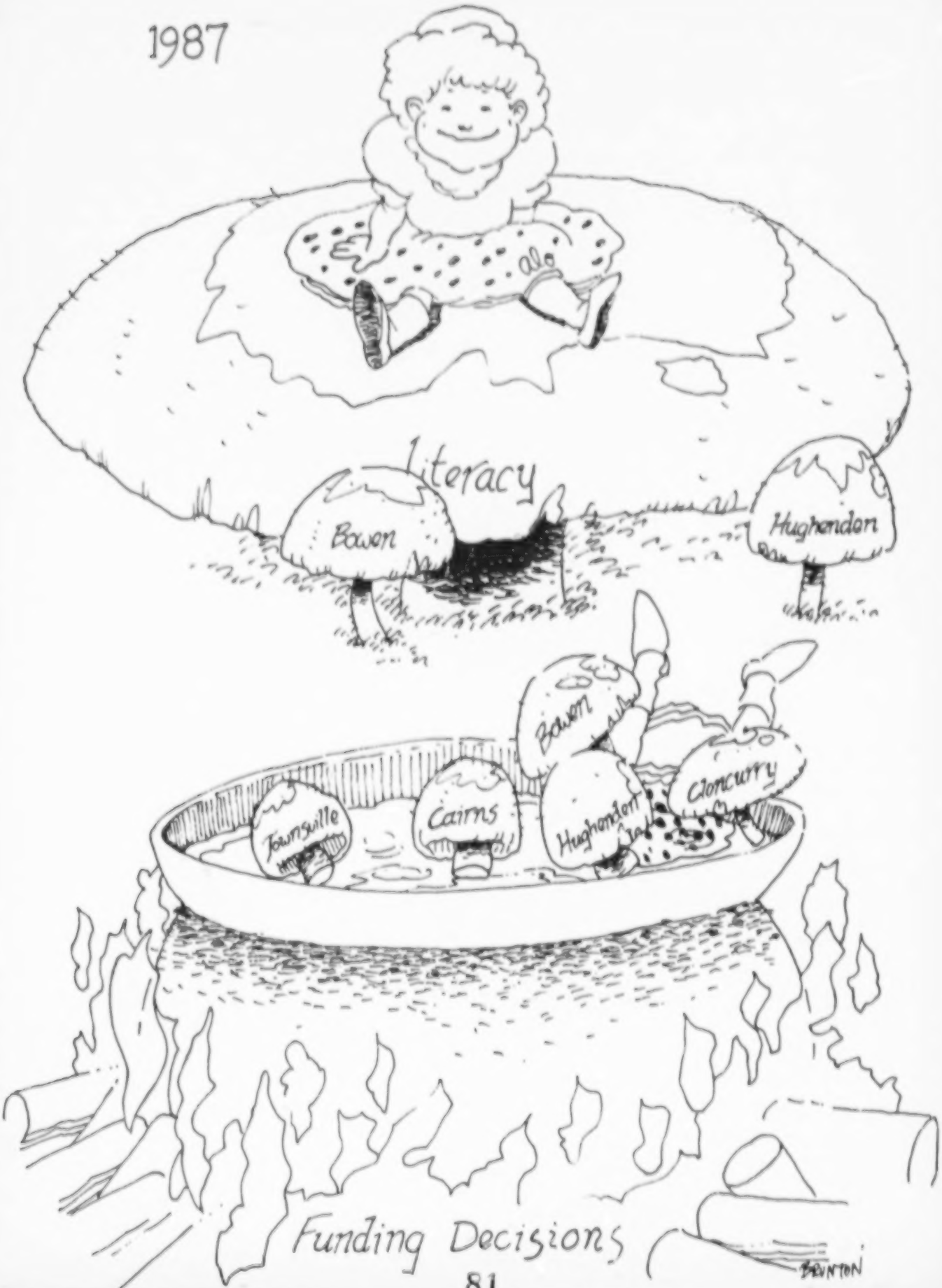
In addition to our aim of offering adults what THEY want we also realise that it is not enough to understand just where people are coming FROM, we must also be aware of where they are going TO. Apart from work and skills training courses, there are also subjects offered by the Board of Secondary School Studies. Back in 1986, discussions were set up with the teachers of these subjects, especially with those in the English area. There is now a structure that will in theory enable a non reader to start with a voluntary tutor, go on into beginners Literacy, then to Pre-Junior Literacy, Junior, Pre-Senior and Senior and so on into tertiary studies. These kinds of organisation in our system are essential if adults are to have a REAL and MEANINGFUL second chance at Education.

After gathering a great deal of information about our students we were able to see the main pathways being taken. (See Fig. 1)

Many of the original goals changed as students became more realistic about their capabilities. In most cases they had underestimated their ability.

STAFF ORGANISATION

I believe that an organiser of anything educational needs to be fully aware of their own underlying philosophy and have very clear aims for what they are endeavouring to achieve. Their philosophy will colour the choices they make in curriculum, the staff they employ and the strategies used inside the classroom. This is especially important in the area of adult literacy where it would be all too easy just to muddle through. My particular educational stance is democratic. I see students at this level as being capable of knowing what they need to learn and the teachers as the catalyst enabling that learning to take place. This is no easy option. To be successful in this approach takes an experienced, versatile teacher with a mature outlook.


1987
Literacy
Bowen
Hughenden
Bowen
Townsville
Cairns
Hughenden
Cloncurry
Funding Decisions
BRUNTON

STUDENT SOURCES	SUBJECTS TAKEN	GOALS ATTAINED
General Public Tafe Courses Rehabilitation Tutors Mancare Open Youth Project Drop in Center Volunteers Bureau	Literacy A&B Numeracy A&B	Personal Part-time work Full-time work Part-time study Full-time study Work promotion Forces entry Forces promotion Volunteer work
Migrant Center University	E.S.L. A&B English for Academic Purposes.	Recognition of Qualifications Tertiary entrance Pass exams

Fig. 1

Being the only full-time person, I count myself as being very lucky in the quality and dedication of the part-time members of the team, without which, very little would be happening. Although they are all capable of working in a variety of areas, I have tried to encourage each teacher to take responsibility for an area of special expertise. My approach has generally been to start a class myself, find funding to employ another teacher and move on to start something else. At present we have a team that can advise me on their special areas, pressing needs, problems and solutions and trends for future planning.

Short full time courses require a meeting at least once a week. Part-time staff meet once a month to report on how their groups are progressing and to keep in touch with one another. In addition we discuss general policy, equipment requirements, problems, special activity organisation such as visits and social functions. Other informal meetings take place all the time. It is essential that part-time staff have adequate support from full-time staff and be made to feel part of the college otherwise they can suffer from all the problems associated with isolation. Other ways we keep in contact with the rest of the college (which is in three campuses) are by the staff news sheet, contact with the college counsellors and through support where possible with other students who are having course work difficulties. For the past two years Literacy seminars have been organised to which all staff are invited. Resourcing the whole college with literacy/numeracy support has been impossible but I shall come back to that subject later.

TEACHER ORGANISATION
ADULT LITERACY ORGANISER

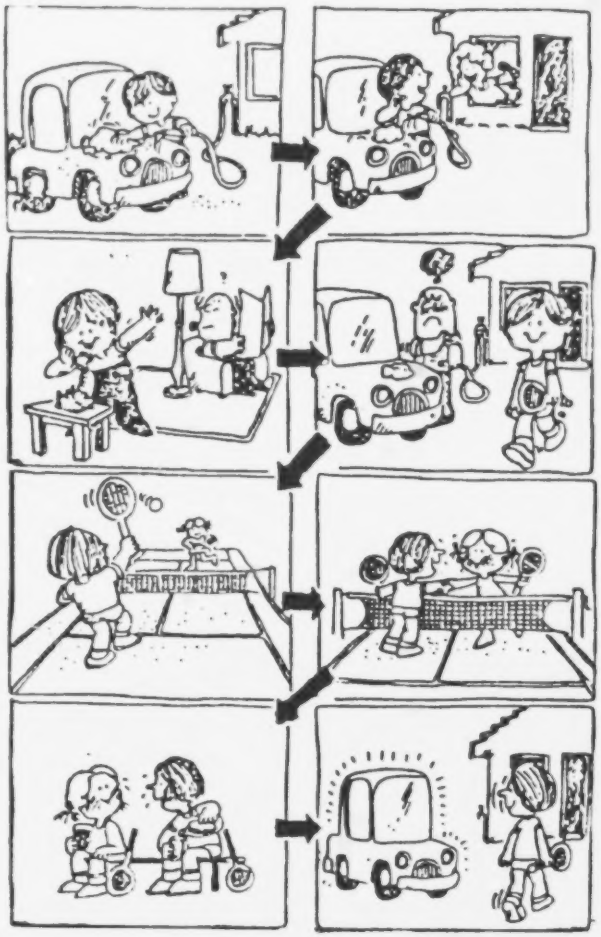
Overall planning of classes, engaging staff, inservice, tutor training, interviewing, counselling and administration, statistics.

LITERACY (2 part-time)	NUMERACY (1 part-time)	E.S.L. (2 part-time)	SHORT FULLTIME (up to 4)
T E A C H I N G	Program planning Course advice Practical problem solving. Diagnostic testing Reporting Record keeping		Special expertise eg computers, business machines.

ORGANISATION of CLASSES

A prospective student's first contact is usually with me, personally by telephone or by coming in to see me. An interview is essential in most cases as people are not always aware of their options. These I explain and between us we decide which would be the most suitable course of action for them. In the case of second language students, I pass these on to the E.S.L. specialists for a much more detailed assessment. Beginner's class work, for the most part, is individualised due to the wide diversity of backgrounds, abilities and aims of the students. Intermediate classes offer skills beyond the survival level and prepare students for entry into other studies. The E.S.L. academic class helps those students already doing university studies or aiming to do so. Records are kept of students long and short term aims and check lists of skills known and attained are filed in the student's personal folder. This ensures continuity of teaching even if there is a sudden change of staff. Diagnostic materials have been collected and are used to discover each student's strengths and defects. Examples of these are:

Reading a Story in Pictures



Students are asked to read the story by following the arrows. This can be used as a purely oral or a written exercise.

Numeracy

Following Addition Problems

1.

22
+46

2.

46
+37

3.

5
2
+1

4.

7
8
+3

5.

24
12
+33

6.

25
46
+18

7.

5
6
1
+4

8.

8
9
7
+6

9.

7
8
4
5

10.

46
39
95
62
+89

11.

324
+547

12.

476
+255

13.

2355
+1747

14.

28 342
+22 949

15.

207
534
+698

16.

5478
2936
+4145

17.

4658
3736
8217
+9066

18.

23 468
25 302
56 537
71 463
+20 594

19. 304 + 2005 + 10 747 + 4026 + 32 590

This type of material is used to discover a student's understanding of the basic processes in maths.

We have an integrated approach to the teaching of new strategies which is cyclical in nature, with a final outcome, hopefully, of independence. This we have found applies equally well to first and second language learners.

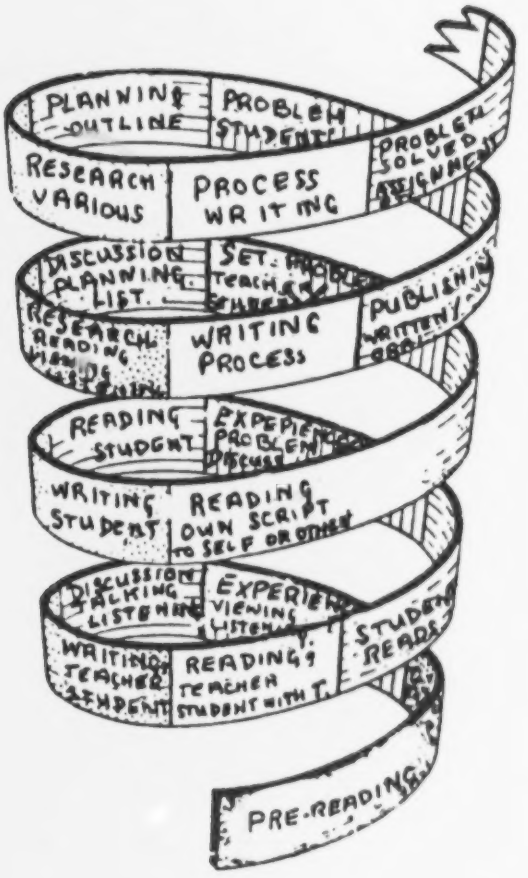
CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT MODEL

CYCLE 4
Independence

CYCLE 3
Teacher support
where necessary

CYCLE 2
Student/teacher
working team

CYCLE 1
Teacher dependency



Samples or photostats of student work is also collected in their personal record folders.

As individuals and as groups, the students are encouraged to produce work to publishing standard for other students or groups to read. Probably our most successful attempt at this was our recent short full-time course where the students produce a magazine during their last five weeks. They literally took over and ran the whole thing themselves including holding formal publishing meetings to discuss organisation of work and format. For the first time the students worked as a concerted team and ignored the clock at the end of the day. This is a good illustration of what can happen when literacy activities stop being mere skills practice and take on a meaningful purpose in the students eyes.

TUTOR ORGANISATION

As previously stated tutor training takes place, when possible, four times a year to build up tutor numbers and replace tutor losses. Tutors leave due to family reasons, move away from Townsville, are ill or need a rest. Increasingly, we are finding tutors are also gaining confidence and are taking up studies in welfare and teaching.

Matching of student to tutor is done according to availability, suburb and student/tutor preference sheets. Tutors are able to get help and support from me and two other tutors by phone or make an appointment to see me for a longer session of advice. Inservice meetings take place as often as possible but there are always problems with meeting times due to some tutors being available only at night and others only in the day. Last year the meetings were alternated, one month a day meeting, the next month a night meeting. This year tutor support from me has been less than adequate due to new courses and inservice visits to Cairns and Hughendon. To rectify this we are employing another teacher to assist for ten hours a week and to take over the training.

During training, prospective tutors are encouraged to be flexible in outlook and adapt to student needs. I encourage also, the planning of lessons and record keeping to enable the student and tutor to keep track of their aims and progress. Should a tutor leave, necessitating the bridging of the student to another tutor, the whole process is much smoother if good prior records have been kept. We also have a group of tutors who assist teachers in class. This is an invaluable service enabling more attention to individuals and group work in more than one area of the college – e.g. classroom and library simultaneously.

Yet another group have been helping apprentices who are here for short term study. The most notable success here was the lifting of student test results from failure to credit level. Unfortunately voluntary tutor numbers never keep up with the demand. This year, especially, I have had to refer a number of prospective students to correspondence literacy courses whilst they have been waiting for a place with a tutor or for a class.

THE MELTING POT – 1988 and beyond.

Since Tafe's change into the Department of Employment, Vocational Education and Training and the news of the phasing out of designated grants at the end of 1989, there has been a deal of confusion amongst literacy staff as to the future direction of Adult Literacy as part of the Tafe system. There are usually, of course, sources of funds to be found, if one knows where to look for them. However, after nearly four years of trying to make long term plans within a funding system that has gone only from semester to semester, I feel that it is time for literacy funding to be put on a permanent footing. We need the security of knowing that we can meet the needs of those adults that come to us for help and that long term planning will actually be able to take place. As an organiser, I find that this on again, off again regime gives me my most difficult problem. I am, all the time, trying to hold on to highly qualified, experienced staff, who never know from one semester to the next whether they have a job or not. They are likely to be lost to us by finding a position that is permanent and which pays regularly. For the student's sake, we cannot afford to lose these people.

When I am in my "Alice" dreaming phase, I see Adult Literacy provision and how it could work to the advantage of all, within my own college. The advantage of working WITHIN the system is the prevention of isolation of the students. Many students feel good about being in a Tafe class, others find it easier to progress on to higher courses after feeling at home within the college buildings.

Special units have operated within high schools for some years now and although there were initial doubts, they and their staff are now an integral part of the school's life. I see Adult Literacy units within Tafe colleges working in a similar way. A properly established unit could not only offer a service to the general public, but could also offer a comprehensive service to students already within the colleges and to employers wishing to help employees update their literacy skills.

To accomplish this it would take a permanent and fully equipped unit which was permanently staffed.

TUTOR ADVISER/ TRAINER.	LITERACY SPECIALIST.	NUMERACY SPECIALIST.	E.S.L. SPECIALIST.

(PART-TIME STAFF AS REQUIRED)

SECRETARY/RECEPTIONIST

TEACHER AID

I would envisage such a unit to be attached to or be very close to the college library. In addition to the usual classrooms, it would be necessary to have a seminar room, a preparation room, a staffroom, a store room and a self paced learning center; the latter being equipped with audio visual and electronic aids and teachers who would assist students in their self pacing programs. This would be necessary to cater for students who cannot attend in class time due to family, work or other course commitments. Self pacing enables a student to work at their own most convenient time. Ideally it would be open and staffed seven days a week and in the evenings. I do not dream that all colleges would be the same. Each college has its own needs and provision should be made accordingly.

So much for Alice's ventures into Wonderland.

Without proper recognition of the needs in Adult Literacy and proper provision for those needs we are just nibbling at the outer edges of the mushroom. We do not advertise ourselves too widely for fear of being swamped. Despite the unfulfilled requirements, organisational and administrative problems, there are many joys in working in this field of education. Meeting and mixing with the wonderful people who are attracted to this work, is a joy. Seeing students blossom and attain their goals after all their hard work is the great pay off.

They say that some kinds of mushroom have a hypnotic addictive quality.

As for working in the Adult Literacy field, I believe that by now I am well and truly hooked. How about you?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Chris Brunton, Further Education Townsville Tafe, for cartoon illustrations.

Literacy staff at the City Campus for supplying relevant information.

OVERCOMING DISABILITIES

Hazel Hoskisson & Leanne Eden

A workshop dealing with strategies for overcoming problems experienced when tutoring students with a disability. Looking at creating an effective learning environment with and without specialist equipment. Conducted by Ms Leanne Eden, Occupational Therapist and Ms Hazel Hoskisson, Tutor, from the Queensland Spastic Welfare League.

INTRODUCTION

Those working in the area of Adult Literacy have long been aware of the importance of making material RELEVANT to individual learner requirements.

We accept this emphasis but would add that the relevant material should also be EFFECTIVE and that the ENVIRONMENT is as important as the material.

By this we mean that the tutor and student should work together to create an individual learning environment, and present material with which the client feels comfortable and confident. This requires an appreciation of individual learning preferences.

An indication of such preferences can be gained through discussion with the client. Ideally the first session (at least) should be spent getting to know the client, talking generally about interests, abilities, education experiences.

It is most important to appreciate the areas in which the client has failed in the past so as not to repeat the experience.

At the Queensland Spastic Welfare League we aim to provide clients with an effective environment for learning through the consideration of SEATING, LIGHTING, EQUIPMENT and MATERIAL.

* Video What is Cerebral Palsy?
Helping Hands

OVERCOMING PERCEPTUAL DISABILITIES

Perceptual disabilities disrupt the flow or interpretation of, information from the senses thus interfer ing with effective communication.

DEFINITION OF PERCEPTUAL DISABILITIES

Perception is generally defined as the "interpretation of information entering the brain via the senses". The process can be broken into four general stages:-

INPUT → INTERPRETATION → OUTPUT
↓
STORAGE

The disruption of the flow of information at any stage of the process can result in a perceptual disability. Such problems may be indicated by the failure of an individual to achieve an anticipated outcome despite adequate intelligence, hearing, vision, motor capacity, emotional adjustment and learning experience.

ASSESSMENT

Ideally if a perceptual disability is indicated a full assessment should be undertaken through a Community Health Centre. If this is not possible, or acceptable to the client, then observation and discussion are the best indicators

available to the tutor.

COMMON PROBLEMS, INDICATIONS AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

The senses most commonly employed when attempting to interpret new information or experiences are those of vision and hearing. A disruption of the flow of information to or from the brain in either of, or a combination of these areas can give rise to a variety of disabilities.

AUDITORY PROBLEMS

Auditory acuity is intact but difficulty is experienced in interpreting, remembering, comprehending or using language.

I. Auditory perception

- a difficulty attending to auditory input, indicated by a short attention span, or a tendency to "tune out" and be easily distracted.
- a difficulty distinguishing relevant messages from competing background noises, indicated by a tendency to request repetition of verbal messages.

Strategies

- Provide a quiet, tranquil environment, avoid over stimulation (visual and tactile).
- Use limited visual stimulation to reinforce key elements of information.
- Use regular attention getting words or stimulation. These cues should be determined through discussion with the client.
- Limit the length of time you speak, establish a listen/do, listen/do routine.
- Give precise information which the student can repeat.

II. Auditory discrimination.

- a difficulty distinguishing fine differences in sound causing confusion and repetition to ensure comprehension. Confusion commonly occurs between the consonant sounds b/d m/n c/g p/t.

Strategies

- clear enunciation by the tutor.
- visual reinforcement, colour coding.
- missing letters "game".
- use of tape recorder.

III. Auditory memory.

- The amount of information an individual can retain for the purposes of action or recall. Disorders in this area may be indicated by difficulty remembering instructions, recalling a series of events, or specific names.

Strategies

- allow enough time for response before providing cues:-
  photographs, flash cards etc.
- present information in short units.
- encourage the making of notes – use words or pictures.
- encourage verbalization and frequent reviews.
- tape record sessions.

Iv. Auditory sequencing.

- difficulty understanding or remembering a temporal sequence or patterns. Difficulties in this area may be indicated by confusion over the order of sounds in a word – enemy – emeny; was – saw
  or order of words in a phrase – the cat sat up; the cat up sat
  and in establishing automatic sequences – days and months.

Strategies

- repeat messages or instruction.
- use simple sentences.
- reinforce with visual stimulation.
- use calendar.
- to ensure accuracy of "time"

ask questions for clues

- common letter combination blocks ed. ing.
- word wheels/slides.
- flash cards/matching on worksheet.
- colour coding first letter.

iv. Visual form constancy.

- Difficulty recognising a form when presented smaller, larger, reversed, rotated, of hidden.

Strategies

- finger tracing/ on palm, in sand.
- establishing verbal sequences to form.
- colour sequence in form.
- matching – letters/words.
- word hunt / letter hunt.
  find all "e's"
  join all "o's"

v. Visual sequencing memory.

- Difficulty remembering the sequences of forms for immediate recall.

Strategies

- tracing.
- sequence cards – letters or words.
- sentence completion – middle, beginning, end.
- repetition.
- colour sequences for letters or words.

vi. Visual figure ground.

- Confusion between figure/form and the background.

Strategies

- Material presented should be clear/simple.
- Avoid confusion by working on a clear desk.
- Large print.
- Contrast of colour.
- Use windows to isolate precise units.
- Establish sequence of listen/do activities.

vii. Visual closure.

- Difficulty remembering complete form.

Strategies

- verbalise form.
- colour form.
- trace letters/words.
- word jigsaws.

viii. Visual spatial relationships.

- Difficulty with directional differences in similar forms.

Strategies

- tracing.
- form letters with plasticine/string.
- dot to dot letters.

ix. Visual motor disabilities.

- Affects the ability to accurately copy a visually presented model.

Strategies

- improve scanning efficiency using windows finger or book mark.
- left to right orientation.
- use typewriter.
- record material to be written on tape – use scribe.
- letter tiles.
- word tiles.
- tracing.
- colour strokes to provide cue to form.
- colour sequences of letters.
- provide cues by providing first letter of each word.

– Was it cold?
– Did you get presents?

- colour code letters/sounds in words.
- games concentrating on first/last sounds.
- use a tape recorder.

v. Auditory comprehension.

- affects ability to comprehend selective vocabulary categories (verbs/adjectives) or structures (passive/questions) family relationships, analogies, abstract language (figures of speech, puns). Problems in this area are often indicated by confusion .

Strategies

- Use simple sentences – avoid negative/passive questions
  – Did the boy hit the ball?
  as opposed to Wasn't the ball hit by the boy?
- Avoid analogies/jokes.
- Base instructions/messages on visual/concrete experience.
- Use clients'own language.
- Video tape sessions.

vi. Oral expression.

- Problems affecting the ability to recall words for spontaneous usage indicated by difficulty organising words, expressing own thoughts and frustration when communicating.

Strategies

- Be patient – allow time to organise and vocalise thoughts.
- cue, prompt – close procedure.
- multiple choice.
- write the word.
- draw sequences of pictures.

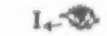
VISUAL PROBLEMS

Visual acuity is within normal limits but difficulties are experienced interpreting, recognising, or remembering what is seen.

I. Visual perception

- difficulty interpreting or giving meaning to what is seen.

Strategies

- Use pictures with verbal/written captions – choice.
- Break sentences into individual words – rearrange.
- Read with a tape.
- Sequences pictures with verbal expression.
- Rebus writing. 
- Colour code.
- Make letters bolder.

II. Visual discrimination.

- Difficulty matching or recognising exact characters of two similar forms – bd / un / if it.

Strategies.

- tracing shapes with fingers or pens.
- colour code commonly confused characters.
- establish a verbal sequence to produce forms.

III. Visual memory.

- Difficulty remembering for immediate recall (4 or 5 seconds later) all the characters of a given form and being able to find this form in an array of similar form.

Strategies

- Tracing – with finger or pen to establish word shape.
- word jigsaws.
- reading with a tape.

- establish sequences.

From these notes it is apparent that perceptual disabilities take a variety of forms, and again we wish to emphasise that if possible a full assessment should be undertaken.

We would also like to note that the perceptual disabilities described do not form anexhaustive list of those which may be encountered – another reason to urge clients to be assessed.

USE – colour
touch
humour
art
movement
routine

BE – firm
warm
prepared
helpful
consistent
analytical
undaunted

POSITIVE FACTORS OF PARTICIPATION FOR WOMEN IN PRISON LITERACY PROGRAMMES

LINDY CASSIDY
SUSAN SIM

This paper assembles data that identify some positive factors which motivate women to participate in literacy programs at Mulawa, a maximum security prison for women in New South Wales. The social, educational, drug and alcohol background of the respondents is discussed in comparison with the general profile of incarcerated women. The motivational factors, classified as external, internal and institutional, are examined to determine the positive factors which motivate women to participate in prison literacy programs.

INTRODUCTION

Only 5% of prisoners currently in NSW gaols are women. Though this figure is small when compared to the male gaols, the actual numbers of women have increased dramatically. In 1978, the census figures gave the average population of women in prison in NSW as 81. By the 1983 census this had increased to 182. (Women in Prison Task Force "WIPTF" p39).

The Report of the Women in Prison Task Force (1985) provides a comprehensive profile of female prisoners incarcerated in NSW. The majority of the women were aged between 18 and 30 years, had left school after completing between 1 and 3 years of secondary education and were unemployed at the time of their arrest. Prior to their imprisonment, social security benefits were the single most common source of income. Seventy-eight percent of the women stated they were drug or alcohol addicted (heroin being the most commonly used). It should be noted that the methodone program had not been introduced at the time of the Taskforce research.

Significantly, few women showed a connection with traditional family structures. Only 10% of the women were married. Of the 46% who were mothers a large proportion (46%) were single parents. (WIPTF pp 43-44). From this data it can be concluded that women in NSW gaols are predominantly young, drug dependent, working class and early school leavers. You cannot make these assumptions about adult literacy students in non-prison programs.

SOCIAL BACKGROUND

The women interviewed were generally older than the average age at Mulawa. (WIPTF p43) The majority of women were between the ages of 28 and 50. There was also a higher proportion of migrant women within the literacy program than within the gaol population. Similar to the findings of the WIPTF, the majority of women worked in semi-skilled employment such as service, sales and process work.

One possible explanation why the women attending the literacy program are older is illustrated by the comments made by a respondent about her third return to prison. She felt that the first two times she had "mucked around". It was not until the third time and a lengthy sentence that she decided to use the gaol's educational resources. Other women who were older but first offenders, articulated a concern about the need to make the most of their time and this was reflected in their regular attendance and genuine application in educational programs.

The educational staff felt that though the students came from a wide range of social backgrounds, they were predominantly disadvantaged economically and educationally.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

The respondents left school more because of:
a) parental/financial pressure; and
b) having achieved their educational goals, (reached the School Certificate level).
These reasons only just outweighed the disinterest/failure category. It is often assumed that people who require help with basic education have had unpleasant school experiences. More than half the women we interviewed left due to factors such as poverty or low expectations of school achievement. The Education staff's assumptions about the educational background of their students measured closely with the results.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL

The questions in the drug and alcohol section of the questionnaire were inadequate. We should have asked "Did you take drugs?" as well as the question we asked, "Did drugs have an effect on your study?" The fact that we have such a low response on this question could mean that we have an atypical sample of women in Mulawa or it could mean that they were not willing to disclose the information. As the women were very open with the rest of the questionnaire, it is likely that they have interpreted the question in terms of "problem" and have concluded that they did not have any problems.

A question was asked whether drugs or alcohol affected the women's study now. The students responded literally and a more accurate response would have been gained from the question, "Have drugs or alcohol ever had an effect on your study?"

The effect of drugs on women's participation in education cannot be underestimated. Teachers commented on the effect that drugs, both legal such as methodone and assorted pills, and illegal such as heroin, or the craving for drugs, had an effect on the women's ability to concentrate. The WIPTF (p82) point to the need to develop appropriate educational programs for drug-dependent women.

INTERNAL MOTIVATION

Using the criteria of achievement developed by Charnley and Jones, The Concept of Success in Adult Literacy (1979:87) the women's responses to questions concerning why they attended the literacy program fall into the following categories:

1. Affective personal achievement – responses elicited included social prospects, self-esteem, making the most of the time and relaxation.

2. Cognitive achievements – included specific literacy skills.

3. Enactive achievements – such as educational opportunities, writing a book and literacy skills associated with children.

4. Socio-economic achievements included job prospects and further education.

5. Affective social achievements – included social prospects and social relationships.

There was a fairly even balance between reasons which had a specific goal orientation and those that dealt with improving social prospects and confidence. Education staff indicated a range of reasons though they emphasised the affective personal achievements as being of more significance.

EXTERNAL MOTIVATION

Although the majority of women said family and friends did encourage them they did not elaborate. This could be due to the way the question was posed or that it was not seen as a particular issue. The education staff felt that women received very positive support from family and friends. This was qualified by saying that some inmates' efforts are ignored and a small minority are "put down" for attending classes.

There was an even balance between problems and no problems in relation to the effects literacy difficulties had on work

and money. This could be a reflection on the way people adjust to limitations. This does not mean that they enjoy them.

The education staff pointed out that these issues could not be considered in isolation from related problems. They noted that people with low levels of literacy could maintain steady jobs though there was limited opportunity for advancement and these jobs often had low rates of pay. Literacy difficulties also affected areas such as filling in job application forms or reading advertisements. Education staff identified problems with money in terms of susceptibility with swindling, poor money skills and therefore the reliance on others to manage money. They felt these could relate to their involvement with crime.

Lack of confidence and fear of others discovering their low levels of literacy restricted women from forming new friends. This is an important point as it is essential for drug dependent women on release to develop a new circle of non-drug dependent friends. Breaking free of dependency affects the motivation of women to continue their education outside gaol.

INSTITUTIONAL MOTIVATION

The effects of being in gaol on the women's efforts to improve their literacy skills were more positive than negative. Gaol was for many women, their first opportunity to address their educational needs. There was also the general feeling of working to use the time to achieve something useful. Having the time to do educational activities was also an advantage for women who would otherwise be occupied with looking after other people (children, spouses, family and so on).

As one woman said:

"It's given me the opportunity to start learning. I don't have to run after the kids or husbands. You've got so much time and education is the best way to do it."

The negative responses dealt mainly with the hard to concentrate category due to gaol tension, distractions such as visits, buy-ups and worry over impending court cases. Obstructions included clashes with work and discouragement from custodial staff. Responses included the following:

"There's so many distractions. It's not only the violence, we have to take into account all the other things – doctors, visits, receptions etc. We have to live our lives in eight hours of the day when we're not locked up. We're forever being called out of class."

"It's a bit harder in gaol. The only good thing is we've got a lot of time but we don't always use it. We're not motivated as we've got too many hassles for yourself to sort out. More things on your mind – your kids you've got to worry about. Maybe I wouldn't do it if I was outside."

As we interviewed only women who continued with education, it is understandable that the positive would outweigh the negative.

PRESENT PRISON LITERACY PROGRAMME

In the rating of reasons for attending literacy classes, it was significant that 'time away from gaol work' was not important for the majority of women.' Helpful teachers rated highly as a very important reason. This could be linked with past negative experiences with school and teachers. 'Helpful for the future' and 'achieving something' were also highly rated reasons. The education staff responded similarly except for 'filling in time' which they rated as significant.

The assumptions made by some custodial and management staff that education is chosen as a "bludge", is not supported by the women's reasons for attending literacy classes. Those women who do choose education as a means of avoiding gaol work, soon withdraw from the program as the educational workload proves too demanding.

The women indicated they received help equally from other inmates and education

staff. The only discouragement reported was from custodial staff. Most of the women said encouragement or discouragement was not the determining factor in their participation. The women who have persisted with education have attended in spite of the lack of encouragement and in the face of discouragement.

"A couple of inmates say it's really good but generally people are doing their own thing."

"Officers discourage it. They call the full-time students the full-time bludgers. They're always making smart comments about how uneducated you are. They always say you have another motive for going to education like getting out of work. Only the education officer is encouraging. Teachers are encouraging."

"In the wing I'm in, girls are all encouraging you to go to education. If I was in the other wings it might not be so good. My wing officer is happy for me to go."

The education staff also commented on encouragement from teachers and education officers and the discouragement from custodial officers. They identified excellence remission* as being an encouraging factor but this was not mentioned by the women. (* Excellence remission of 2 days per month is granted on the basis of outstanding performance in education and/or industry. In the past excellence remission has been difficult to obtain for those students undertaking education).

In determining how education fits in with gaol routine, ten out of the eighteen women said they had no problems. It must be noted however, that five of the ten were full-time students and therefore education would not have to compete with industry. The other women experienced problems when education clashed. The education staff commented that full-time students had their own routine but part-time students found it difficult to accommodate education with work duties.

They also commented that basic education was seen as more important than other education subjects. Education in general however was seen as a low priority in comparison with other demands on time such as buy-ups, visits, methodone and jobs. The low status of education is confirmed by the low rates of pay for full-time students and the lack of physical accommodation for classes. The fact that all teachers with Corrective Services are part-time, reinforces the fringe nature of education within the gaol.

The literacy tasks that proved to be generally more difficult were:
filling in a job application form;
applying in writing for remission;
writing a letter of complaint; and
writing a statement for your court case.

These tasks tend to involve a literacy which requires critical thinking. Writing a letter of complaint to the Housing Commission for example, would require confidence to act and an assertion of rights. A person may have the literacy skills to fill in a medicare form but the kind of literacy skills required to initiate action in defence of your rights requires a literacy that not only involves reading and writing, but speaking, listening, critical thinking and action.

This is also supported by education staff who comment that it is rare to have women with extremely low levels of literacy. The problems occur more with independently initiated writing tasks. It is a point of debate within the gaol as to the percentage of women with extremely low literacy levels. There is no evidence to support either side of the debate and it would be useful for the Department of Corrective Services to investigate the extent of the literacy problems in Women's Prisons. As a survey is currently being prepared to research the extent of literacy problems within Australia, it would be useful to adapt it for women's prisons.

The question on how people were progressing in literacy classes indicated that the women weren't able to articulate what they were learning. Rather than

concluding that the women weren't learning anything, it is more an indication that self assessment of progress is a skill which also needs to be taught.

The changes in the women since starting the literacy program were less goal oriented and specific than the reasons which were given for starting the program. The women and the education staff identified changes in confidence, attitude, independence, ambition as well as concentration, listening skills and knowledge.

These responses correspond with the Charnley and Jones research (P 174) which indicated that literacy students judged their success in terms of 'affective personal achievements' and 'affective social achievements'. These were considered more important than the 'cognitive and socio-economic achievements'.

IDEAS FOR CHANGE

Most of the women who were interviewed indicated that gaol was an opportunity to return to education and make use of the time in gaol to achieve something. Prison education has the potential of providing effective and innovative programs to utilise these opportunities for women. Before education programs can start to have a substantial impact on women in prison, changes need to be implemented to improve the status and provision of educational programs within prison.

These changes should affect the whole structure of education within prisons. The efforts of education staff at the local level continues to be undermined when the gaol system does not recognise the important role that education could play for women in prison.

One way of incorporating education more fully into the gaol system is to provide appropriate and sufficient physical accommodation for education. When educational facilities have to make do with available space, it reinforces the unstable peripheral nature of education.

The appointment of full time teachers would also improve the status and provision of education programs. Part time teachers cannot always rely on altruism to motivate them to continue working in gaols. The insecurity, limited job advancements and lack of recognition of teaching in prison means that teachers are forced to either leave or stagnate. For teachers to provide innovative programs they need to be encouraged to keep up with educational developments.

Full-time students also need to be recognised and supported by appropriate rates of pay. If education is seen as a 'bludge' compared with industry, then the motivation to improve their opportunities for a change in life style will be undermined. Students should not be penalised for attending education programs by distinguishing between industry and education performance in the granting of excellence remission.

Support also needs to be given to improving the communication between custodial and educational staff. This would demystify these two areas of work in prison and contribute to more cooperation between the two. This may happen at a local level but it is not reinforced at the structural level. Education in prison is not addressed in the training of custodial staff and custodial duties are not discussed fully with teachers and education officers.

Literacy programs should also be integrated with other educational subjects. Its value lies more with integrating with other courses such as 'lifestyle programs'. Basic education is often seen as more important than other programs, however its effectiveness is limited in isolation.

The positive factors associated with prison literacy programs which have emerged in this research, indicate that there is an exciting potential in education to be exploited. Rather than seeing education as a management tool and an occupier of time, education in prison should be seen as an important channel for educational opportunity.

THE EFFECT OF LANGUAGE ANALYSIS ON TEACHING IN ADULT LITERACY

DARYL EVANS

There is plenty of evidence that interest in a 'genre approach' to teaching is steadily increasing. The evidence can be found in the content of tertiary courses in language education, journals to do with reading and writing programs in schools, and in projects undertaken by several states in adult literacy work.

I have been interested in a 'genre approach' for a couple of years now at Footscray as a result of my observations of the work done by other teachers at the College and, more recently, as part of my Off Campus studies at Deakin University. I perceived a need for change in the adult literacy teaching in which I was involved and so some of the changes now being tried at Footscray resulted from my understanding of (and unease with) 'genre'. The organisational changes at the College – for example, classes in Basic English of twenty students – are made possible by incorporation of a 'genre approach' .... but they are not forced by that approach. I hope that these changes in teaching theory and practice can be documented next year.

At the outset, I should express a concern that we don't let a simplistic interpretation of a 'genre approach', the 'back to the basics' beliefs, and of 'process writing' create disagreement about issues which do not actually exist! On the other hand, there are important issues that need to be identified and debated – but not now.

Having taken evasive action, I would like to introduce the Workshop itself.

The following activities (Introduction – 8) constitute most of the handouts for a 45-minute Workshop on Day Two of the Conference. The Workshop itself followed a 45-minute explanation of 'genre' by Adele Rice (and Ann Beaverson), and demonstration of ways in which '.... not exposing adult learners to a wide variety of written genres is considered to be disempowering our learners ..' (Conference Program, p.25). I decided to use activities relevant to our attempts at Footscray to develop actual teaching materials – with the expectation that most people in attendance would have come from the previous (theory) session, or would have familiarity with the theory from their own investigations.

HANDOUT ONE: 'FRONTISPIECE' – WORKSHOP PLAN "THE EFFECT OF LANGUAGE ANALYSIS ON TEACHING IN ADULT LITERACY"

a. Introductory workshop activities: a reminder that people, who are literate, can use written language appropriate to particular social purposes.

b. Teaching writing: is Garth Boomer correct? No longer: 'process writing' versus 'a genre-based approach'?

c. A genre-based approach: not to be misinterpreted as a Back to the Basics cult.

d. Background reading? See, for example, language education books printed by Deakin University Press, Victoria 3217. Also: Hammond, J., An Overview of the Genre-based Approach to the Teaching of Writing in Australia, *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1987, pages 163-181.

e. The attempt to teach 'according to genre' at the Footscray College of TAFE.

f. Further workshop activities: re-write two texts as tried by students at Footscray.

g. Future developments.

h. Evaluation of this 45-minute workshop. (Sheet not included in this Conference Report).

HANDOUT TWO: LETTER OF APPLICATION

(People's ability to 'upgrade' the letter showed how familiar we are with correct 'social tone'.

ACTIVITY ONE:

3rd January, 1988. Your name is Jo Smith. You want a full time job stacking shelves at the ABC Supermarket, 999 Bridge Road, Jonesville, 3999.

Convert the following note into a socially acceptable application for the job.

I want a job stacking shelves at your supermarket. Last year I got my year 10 at Uptown High School. For two years I did a morning paper round at the Jonesville Newsagency. I live at 123 High, Uptown, 3998.

Jo Smith

HANDOUT THREE: CONVERSION OF THE LEGALISTIC ROAD RULE

(Danger: tutors can become absorbed in their technical facility with language (in the same way that we sometimes continue with mindless word patterns).)

ACTIVITY TWO

Re-write the following legalistic road rule, using the pronoun 'you'.

Approaching a cross intersection without traffic lights or traffic control signs, a driver must give way to vehicles as follows:

— *vehicles on the driver's right which are proceeding straight ahead;*

— *vehicles on the driver's right which are turning right at the cross intersection.*

Consider the changes in tone, phrase structure, and vocabulary.

HANDOUT FOUR: EXCERPT FROM GARTH BOOMER'S ARTICLE – SEE APPENDIX A

Discussion: Is it so simple?

HANDOUT FIVE: LIST OF POINTS ABOUT A 'GENRE APPROACH'.

(Please note: concern that 'authorities' could impose teaching of a narrow range of genre; large-group teaching need not be education on the cheap.)

A genre-based approach

— interventionist

— context $\rightleftharpoons$ language

— varied language/context $\longleftrightarrow$ varied text-type (genre).

— some genres are more highly valued (more 'productive') than others.

— authorities could impose narrow selection of genres.

— enhances the 'cueing strategies' available to the non-reader and new reader.

— could provide teachers and tutors with ideas on the next steps after adult literacy students have gained confidence and experience in 'personal writing'.

Footscray College of TAFE

— large groups of students (15) of mixed literacy skill level.

— not a labour saving device (team teaching; integration aide assistance).

— two or three classes per week.

— 'streamed' tutorials.

— discussion with students beforehand about selected genre.

— potential application to particular purpose text (e.g. apprenticeship modules; letters of complaint, the study of the road rules, the study of history, geography, and the language of mathematics thinking ....)

— proposed study of: language type requested by students; language type requested by 'every day living'; language type produced by students, taught by teachers.

HANDOUT SIX: RECOUNT OF COOKING A QUICHE – TURNED INTO A SET OF INSTRUCTIONS

(Works well as a language experience following a cooking and eating experience.)

ACTIVITY THREE (Appendix B)

Based on the experience of cooking a quiche as described in the book EASY COOK BOOK Volume Two (RMIT, 1986) available from TAFE PUBLICATIONS UNIT, 37 LANGRIDGE STREET, COLLINGWOOD, VICT., 3066 (03) 419 6611 (Appendix B).

Students and teachers follow the recipe (including instructions about type and amount of ingredients) – see sample to compare your version with the Cookbook.
Later on, students and teachers write up an account of the cooking session.†

Last Friday, we cooked a quiche.
First, we lined the dish with pastry and trimmed the edges. Second, we grated the cheese, sliced the mushrooms and onions, and chopped the bacon.
Next, we fried the bacon and onion for five minutes.
We beat the eggs and milk and then placed the bacon and onion in the pastry dish before we added milk and mixed it all together.
Finally, we baked the dish in a very hot oven (210°C) for 10 minutes before we reduced the temperature to 190°C for another 30 minutes.
It was a great quiche.

† Students have already practised 'organising' re-counts with First ... later on ... Finally, ... etc.

HANDOUT SEVEN: VIDEOTAPE RECOUNT OF CAR ACCIDENT TURNED INTO A 'DISPASSIONATE' REPORT.

(Demonstrates usage of materials readily available and very relevant to adults e.g. news report.)

ACTIVITY FOUR

View the relevant excerpt from the Legal Studies videotape: The Driver.

Re-write the witness' observation in a style appropriate to the police constable's subsequent report to the Traffice Investigations Unit. Refer to the witness throughout the report as "the witness".

ACCIDENT REPORT

(A)

DATE OF REPORT: 18/05/81
NAME OF WITNESS: Jim Smith
Last Saturday night 17th May, at about 10 o'clock, I was walking along Merriweather Avenue towards the corner of Hatch Road. I heard a car travelling too fast as it came north along Merriweather Avenue. As the car reached the corner of Hatch Road, I saw the traffic lights turn orange. The driver attempted to turn right into Hatch Road but he was travelling too fast. I estimate his speed at 100 km per hour before the corner and 70 km per hour during the turn.

I watched the car skid as it turned the corner and crash head on into a lamp post in Hatch Road.

We saw two passengers climb from the rear seat of the car and the driver dtagger from the front. However, we left the passenger in the front seat as she seemed to be dead.

Some people who lived nearby ohoned the police and the ambulance.

(B)

DATE OF REPORT: 18/05/81
NAME OF WITNESS: Jim Smith
DATE OF ACCIDENT: Saturday 17 May
TIME OF ACCIDENT: 22.00
LOCATION: corner of Merriweather Avenue and Hatch Road
EVENTS: A car travelled fast in a northerly direction along Merriweather Avenue. A car reached the corner of the traffic lights. A car skidded on Hatch Road. Speed was estimated at km per hour before the corner and 70 km per hour during the turn.

USE NEXT SHEET FOR "POLICE CONSTABLE'S" ACCOUNT OF WITNESS' REPORT

The car skidded as it turned the corner and crashed head on into a lamp post in Hatch Road.

Two passengers climbed from the rear seat of the car and the driver staggered from the front. However, the passenger in the front seat was left in the car as she seemed to be dead.

The police and the ambulance were phoned by people who lived nearby.

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from: BARTH BOOMER, "Standards and Literacy", (art.) in Directions Literacy, State Board of Education, Victoria, June 1988, pages 10 - 16.

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I believe that Australian schools have made great advances in the teaching of literacy over the past fifteen years, especially over the past five years, perhaps more than any other English speaking country except New Zealand. The old teaching of literacy that you and I had was, and to a considerable extent still is, entrenched but new insights and new courses (such as ELIC) have begun to challenge the dominant culture of literacy teaching. While alarmist critics of so-called 'process' writing would have us believe that this 'fad' has swept like an epidemic into every classroom in Australia, the facts, based on text book sales and observation, are that about 10 per cent of our schools and teachers are concertedly working in a new mode. My judgement is that the advances are occurring most swiftly in the early years but that considerable resistance still prevails from Year Three or Four onwards.

'PROCESS' VS 'GENRE'

Let me not be misunderstood. I am not endorsing all that goes under the banner of 'process writing' or 'the whole language approach' or 'organic' literacy. Wherever there are breakthroughs in our understanding of language there will be distortions, excesses and a few bunglings as reforms are taken up by enthusiastic teachers. There are, at present, tendencies for teachers to go overboard in some aspects of teaching and to lose sight of some of the basic, commonsense principles of literacy teaching which have always applied. But that is no reason for the scoffing and belittling that sometimes greets the teachers who are in there having a go. Sadly, much of the bickering and in-fighting about new methods is occurring within the profession itself, particularly amongst academics. Often the debate is polarized into simplistic slanging about the virtues of process methods as opposed to the genre school of thought or, at another pole, direct instruction and grammar. We need to put this bickering to rest without killing continuing critique and improvement. In particular, the process camps and the genre camps need to de-camp and form a new force in the service of penetrating literacy.

Let me simplify the basic disagreement. The genre people come to the problem of literacy through a rigorous study of language in use and believe that children need progressively to add more and more kinds of competence in language to their repertoire. To teach them how to do this, and how to operate well within the various conventions, teachers need a deep knowledge of how language functions and changes with context and purpose. There is no doubt that penetrating literacy, as I am representing it, is the goal of these advocates.

The process people come to the problem through close observation of how children learn to talk, read and write. They observe the conditions under which this best occurs and they take particular note of the strategies and behaviours of good language users as clues which will inform good teaching. The ELIC course and the popularised work of people like Donald Graves endorse and inform this approach. There is a basic, powerful concept of the importance of the child's intentions and the child's authorial voice as the powerhouse of penetrating literacy. The child is seen as a kind of inquisitive language scientist seeking better and better ways to make sense. The learner's self chosen personal writing, often story writing, is seen as the generating plant from which growth into new forms occurs. In the early stages, there should be tolerance of interim grammars (imperfect formulations by adult standards) but development towards more fully formed presentation should be fostered and monitored.

Both of the major progressive schools of thought, therefore, share similar ends in terms of powerful literacy for all. My view, to generalise, is that the genre people may be a bit light on with respect to understanding of children's learning and classroom teaching while the process people may be too little concerned with the products (the skilled performance) of children and perhaps with in-depth knowledge about how to analyse children's linguistic performance and to intervene in its development. I can see no reason, given their shared purposes, why proponents on both sides should not get together. There are good signs in this State that this is occurring. While academic skirmishing may continue, pragmatic curriculum leaders and teachers are beginning to put it all together. This State is very well placed to take the vanguard in such rapprochement, with the encouragement of the State Board and all those interest groups which make up the Board.

I see the enemy if we must seek out an enemy as the uninspired, routine drilling of literacy on an animal training model, the exercise sheets and parrot-fashion mode, which may leave children with the outward signs of literacy but with a spiritual, intentional void. We should not delude ourselves that this kind of regime is a thing of the past. It is very much alive and well, not just in literacy teaching but even more so in the teaching of mathematics. My view as to why it persists is that this kind of teaching is a great way to control and keep good order. It is often a case, from the teachers' point of view, of dividing up the work into bite sized exercises and conquering. Furthermore, within very artificial and narrow limits many of the children perform. It seems to work. The trouble is that the side effects may be lethal.

MAKING PROGRESS

There are very interesting developments in this State towards a comprehensive

learnt to read and write, passing on in due course to their children the message that literacy is important. And in this teaching parents have played a significant part. At the core of much of the new knowledge about how to teach reading is the commonsense formula implicit in the act of reading on the knee of an adult, the child following along as the written word becomes encoded into talk and coming to associate marks on paper with sense and meaning. In the next two hundred years we could do no better, at base, than to remember and practise the almost natural act of reading intimately to the very young - where pleasure, warmth and security accompany the acquisition of a powerful inheritance.

In early days the reading materials available to parents and teachers were often sparse and, in hindsight, seemingly unsuitable - the Holy Bible, public service gazettes, plumber's manuals, a worn copy of the Complete Works of Shakespeare. It is sometimes asserted that we should be thankful that toilet paper was not available in early times. Many a pleasurable and instructive moment was spent in silent contemplation of catalogues and old newspapers! Where the written word was available, any written word, the potential for the teaching of reading was also there. Those of my vintage may look back in some horror, and yet considerable pride, at the stilted and circumscribed primers from which we learnt to read in the early 1940s in comparison with the early childhood classrooms of today, bursting with print, glowing with wonderful, colourful story books and designed to provide cosy corners for cuddling up with a friendly book.

That we learnt to read in such spartan conditions is a testimony to the tenacity of our teachers and to the human drive to make sense of the cryptic and arcane. We were expected to read and we did. And even with all our refinements and riches today our efforts for literacy will flag and fail if that expectancy at school, at home and in the intentions of the young, is missing. To a large extent, I suggest, schools achieve what they expect and demand.

CIRCUMSCRIBED LITERACY

But let us not glorify the literacy that most of us got in our years at school. My view is that, while most of us certainly learnt to read and write to a degree, it was by and large a rather circumscribed literacy, a blinkered literacy, a literacy to get by on but not a penetrating literacy. Indeed our whole schooling was predicated on us as students answering what we were asked, having been already instructed in how to answer. In this sense, our education in literacy could be seen to have been an education to a degree for conformity and compliance. Questioning and critique were the privileges afforded to those relative few who eventually made it through the University and out into the professions. In a country which depended on workers working without too much strife, the transmission of a functioning but not penetrating literacy was sufficient prerequisite for a co-operating, limited democracy where the masses could read the instructions and fill in the forms. Of course, once literacy got into the hands of the people there was no stopping those who, with the bit between their teeth, taught themselves to go beyond and to answer questions by searching the domains of public libraries and other literature sources.

Indeed I would say that the public library and the underground passing of rich texts from hand to hand, have been important ingredients in the growth of a gutsy, subversive, critical literacy in this country, an antidote to the more constraining and conservatising forces of school literacy. I do not wish to be seen as making blanket statements. We can all remember teachers who taught us not only the basics but also the ability to question, to probe, to search and to test. Nevertheless, most adults of my vintage in Australia are pretty timid about their reading and writing. The majority of people might have the tools but they are often very tentative in their use, I think.

THE NEXT STEP

Over the past fifteen years, we have seen the beginnings of an important revolution in the teaching of literacy in this country. It is a revolution which is gathering for the new journeys we will need to take in the next 200 years if we are to continue to evolve as a species. It is a revolution, which, not satisfied with mass, circumscribed literacy, seeks to provide all with a penetrating, diversified, liberating literacy.

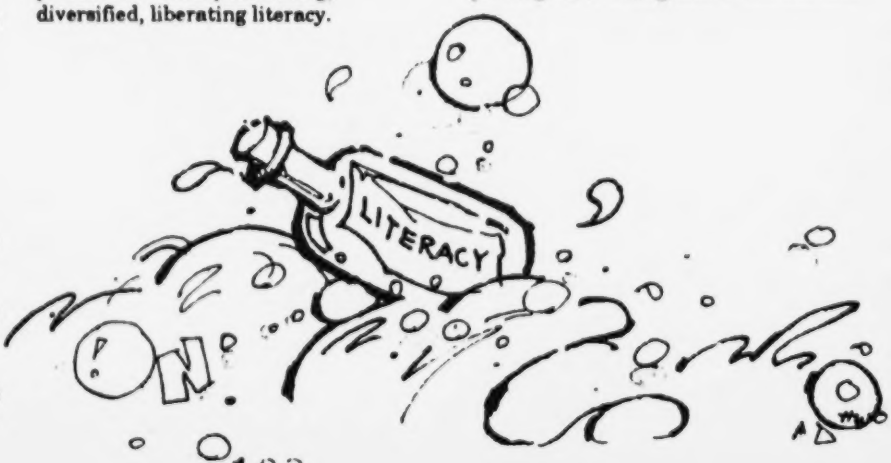
Contrary to the malevolent messages of the rampant but factually bankrupt Mr Sheridan, self-appointed viligante on education, we have gone almost as far as we can go in the inculcation of basic, functioning literacy. We still need to lift our game in the education for literacy of Aboriginal people and of significant sections of the adult migrant and working class members of society, and in ensuring that those young people living in poverty do not slide off the edges of our schools, but we are dealing with an almost super-saturated solution when it comes to basic, functioning literacy.

Now it is time to look at the changing literacy demands of society, the changing nature of work practices, the changing challenges of the economy and technology and to the raised expectations of our people with regard to quality of life and cultural fulfilment. In many ways, society is outgrowing its literacy clothing. We need a new literacy wardrobe. We need changed literacy aspirations and changed standards of performance.

CONTENDING FORCES

It is not surprising that the revolution in literacy to which I have referred is encountering some opposition in some quarters, especially from certain retro-revolutionary academics supported by prophet-of-doom journalists. This leads fearful parents, understandably worried about their children's future and artificially stimulated by the media, to believe the propaganda and put pressure on schools to go back to a circumscribed literacy regime, thereby unwittingly putting the brakes on the empowerment of their own children and thwarting the necessary reconstruction of the Australian culture and economy.

We are witnessing a battle for the hearts and minds of the young people of Australia, a battle about what kind of society we are to become. There is no doubt that to some will come the privilege of learning how to use the new



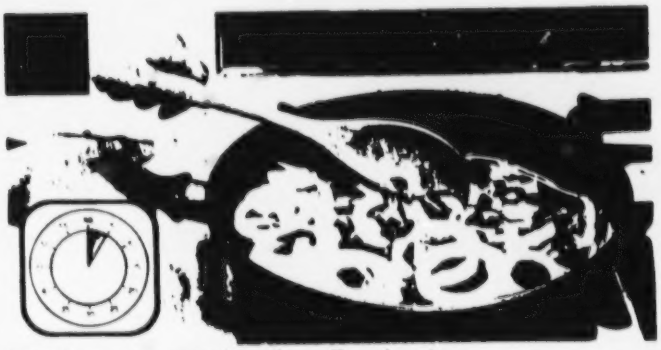
From:
Easy Cook Book Volume Two
(TAFE Publications Unit,
Melbourne, 1986)

3 5 6 7 8

Line dish with pastry, trim edges.

Grate ½ cheese, slice mushrooms.

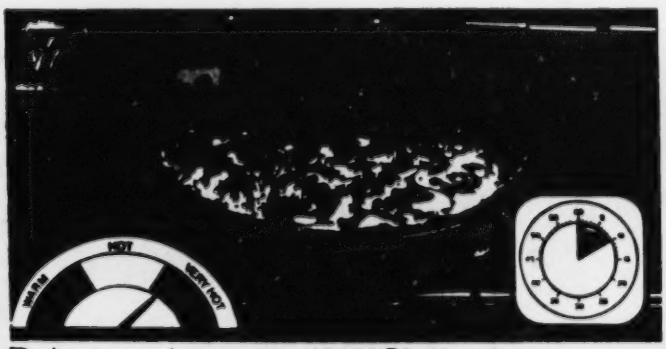
Slice onion, chop bacon.



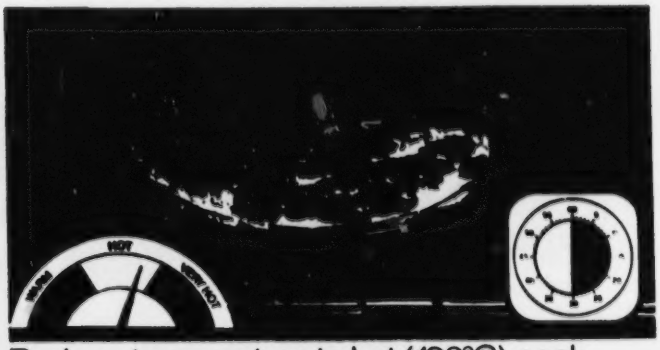
Fry bacon and onion 5 minutes.

Beat eggs and milk.

Place bacon and onion in dish, add milk,mix.



Bake very hot oven (210°C) 10 minutes.



Reduce temperature to hot (190°C) cook 30 minutes.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION – ITS ROLE IN THE RE-EDUCATION OF BRAIN-INJURED PEOPLE

KRYSTYNA J. CURTIS

INTRODUCTION

Over the last year or so a great deal of local and national attention in the U.K. has been focused on the provision of learning opportunities for adults. The Adult Basic Education (ABE) Service in England and Wales is a needs based service and it is our brief to respond to the educational needs of the communities in which we work.

I should like to bring to your attention a project which I have researched, developed and organised over the last 6 years in the Rhymney Valley district of Mid Glamorgan where I live.

The Dysphasia Project provides literacy and numeracy tuition for adults who have acquired language disorders resulting from brain damage following strokes or road accidents. The project is funded by the County's ABE Service and involves professional educationalists and volunteer tutors. It is the only such scheme in Wales, but a few similar ones have been developed in England but these are not incorporated into the Local Education Authorities' Further Education programme.

We will look at the causes of dysphasia, the literacy and numeracy problems that may arise following a brain injury, assessment of these difficulties and appropriate teaching strategies for re-learning communicating skills.

It raises a number of controversial issues, including the role of education and voluntary workers in dysphasia therapy as well as the fundamental question of whether dysphasia therapy is effective anyway.

I'd like to cover these issues briefly in the limited time available, to give you a flavour of the work being done with dysphasics in the Rhymney Valley Project.

WHAT IS ADULT BASIC EDUCATION?

The Adult Literacy Campaign was launched in 1975 to cater for the needs of adults experiencing problems as a result of having left school with persisting basic difficulties in reading and writing.

At its inception the necessity for "special needs" groups such as dysphasia and the hearing impaired was not envisaged. In 1980 the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (ALBSU) was established to act as the central focus for adult literacy and basic skills in England and Wales. Apart from literacy and numeracy we were now charged to provide tuition in related basic communication and coping skills without which progress in and towards education, training or employment is impeded. This broader brief opened the way for development and this is why it was possible to argue the case for including dysphasic adults into our ABE programme. Today most local education authorities in England and Wales provide basic skills tuition for adults but there is considerable variation in the scale and style of provision within each authority.

HOW THE PROJECT BEGAN

The Dysphasia Project developed from a direct plea to the ABE Unit in January 1982 from the family of a lady who had a near fatal car accident 2 years previously. She was in a coma for 8 weeks. The recovery from her physical injuries was slow and included many operations. During all this time she was not given any speech therapy for the unseen injuries of language impairment that she had also suffered. Before the accident she was an energetic, articulate and intelligent business woman.

I followed up this referral in the normal

course of my work but it rapidly became obvious that Anne was quite unlike our usual students. I enlisted the help of the community speech therapist who assessed Anne's difficulties and suggested ways in which she might be helped. My own background as a scientist and educationalist together with my experience of ABE enabled me to recognise and understand the condition known as DYSPHASIA. This combination of experiences made the proposed link between medicine and further education a feasible undertaking.

If I was going to help Anne and possible others like her I knew I needed to research fully all aspects of dysphasia. It took 2 years of my own time. The project was launched in 1984 at the local College of Further Education but it is now based in the District Further Education Offices, where I also look after all other ABE provision.

Referrals of some 35 dysphasic adults have been made over the first 4 years and I have trained 50 volunteers. We currently have 3 classes in the County and 2 more are scheduled to open in the Autumn.

WHAT IS DYSPHASIA?

Our ability to use language is perhaps our most fundamental feature as human beings but this can be disrupted by strokes or other brain injuries if the brain is damaged in areas which control our use and understanding of words and numbers. These areas are called LANGUAGE CENTRES and the resulting impairment is known as DYSPHASIA (fig. 1).

CAUSES OF DYSPHASIA

Language is our inner knowledge of the sounds, words and grammar that compose English. It is a complex code that we learn as children. We express language as sound waves (speech) or as written symbols (writing). This inner ability is controlled by the language centres of the brain and anything that damages them can therefore damage our language 'code'.

By far the commonest cause of dysphasia is a stroke. The incidence of stroke rises with age BUT it is not a condition that only affects the elderly. A stroke is a disorder of the blood supply to the brain. In a thrombosis the blood vessel is blocked and brain cells die if deprived of vital oxygen for more than 4 minutes. In a haemorrhage the blood vessel bursts and this destroys brain tissue. Road accidents can cause language problems. Many of the young dysphasics have had motor bike accidents. Brain tumors can also cause dysphasia as they grow and press on language areas of the brain. Sometimes an operation to remove a benign growth can leave the patient with severe problems.

Although dysphasia has been known of for thousands of years it is only during the past century that any real understanding of it has been reached. No two dysphasics have the same problem but the end result is a condition causing bewilderment frustration and isolation. It is a tragic puzzle for relatives to watch and a loss of self esteem for the sufferers.

Eisenson, an American writer on dysphasia, tries to sum up how far-reaching the impairment can be with this definition:

"Dysphasia is defective symbol behaviour. The individual's ability to deal with all types of symbols may be disturbed .... The dysphasic may have difficulty in understanding and or using speech, reading, writing, gestures, pictures and numbers. If unlucky, he may find himself totally unable to communicate his thoughts, wishes and needs to another person."

There is nothing bizarre about the language behaviour of dysphasics, merely a question of degree. We have all often mis-read, mis-heard or misunderstood and suffered the embarrassment of not recalling someone's name and not recognising a voice on the telephone. How often have you had a word on the tip of the tongue and yet been quite unable to recall it? At times we all have difficulty expressing our thoughts in written words or language and this is not related to how articulate we

Regions of the brain — Left Hemisphere

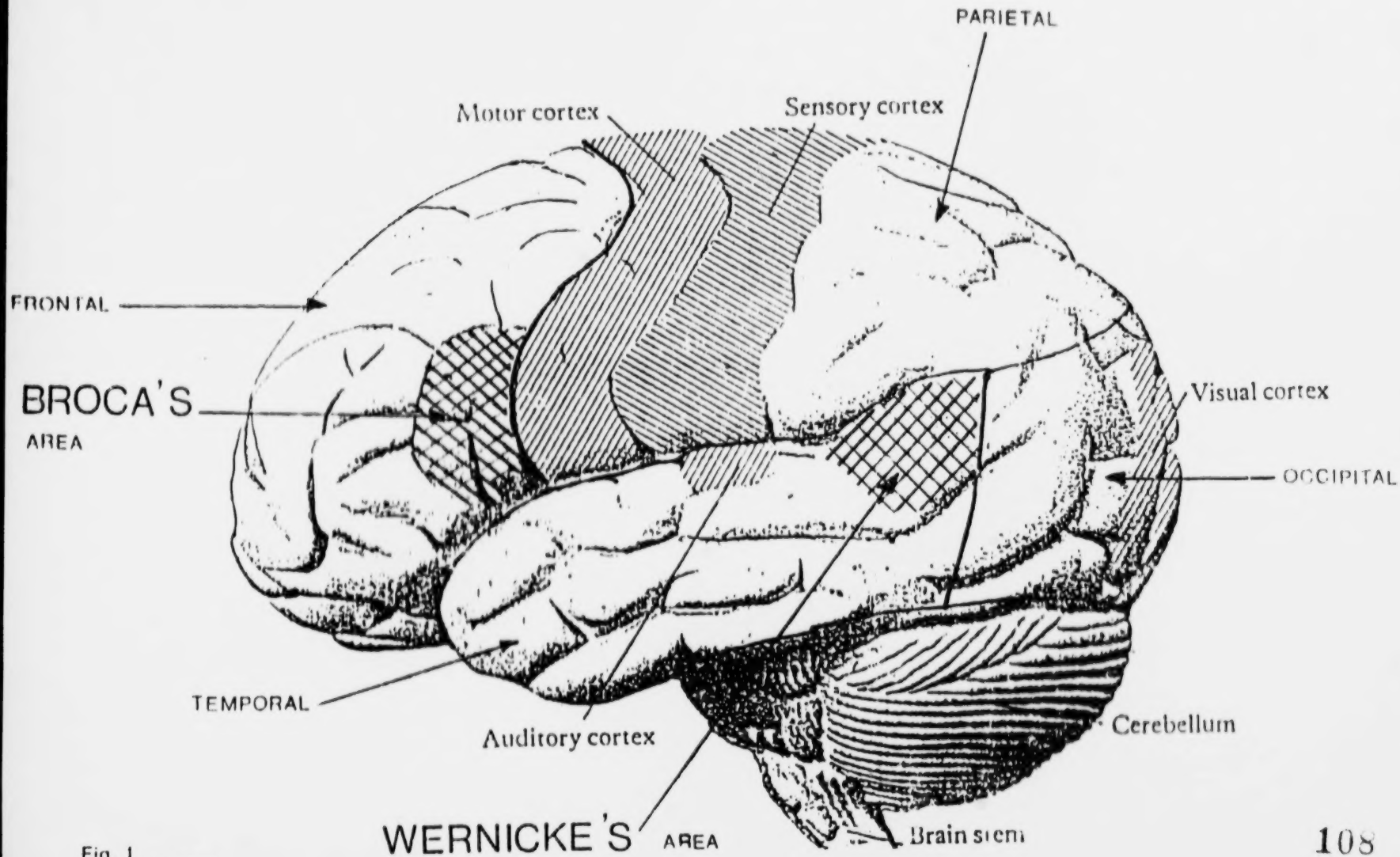


Fig. 1

107

108

101.

might be. For dysphasics it is a nightmare. Their thoughts are trapped in the brain and they are unable to communicate.

It is easy to think that if a person has difficulty in speaking properly at least he can write. This is not the case. The normal speech chain (fig. 2) shows us and Eisenson's definition confirms, our understanding and use of language is a sequence of events that are all interdependent.

ASSOCIATED PROBLEMS

With the widespread damage the stroke or head-injury causes, other brain capacities besides that of language may obviously be affected.

Physical and medical problems include paralysis or weakness of one half of the body (HEMIPLEGIA) commonly the right side; paralysis of muscles controlling articulation and swallowing (Appendix 1); disturbances of vision; epilepsy and impairment of senses (deafness, smell and taste). Psychological effects of brain damage can be equally problematical as the dysphasia. The person may be disorientated in space and time and in his understanding of the uses of objects (object agnosia). He may be subject to uncontrollable laughter or tears and may suffer poor concentration and memory. Added to this is the understandable depression and bewilderment he feels when he finds his speech affected.

LITERACY AND NUMERACY PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH DYSPHASIA

Usually the most obvious indication of dysphasia is the difficulty of understanding and using speech. However the connections between speaking and reading and writing must also be considered in any study of language.

There are two well recognised types of dysphasia, Expressive and Receptive. (Appendix 2)

EXPRESSIVE dysphasia is a language disturbance resulting from damage to Broca's area in the frontal region of the brain. It is sometimes called Broca's aphasia and is rather like an exaggerated "tip of the tongue" condition. The person affected will speak slowly with enormous effort and sounds are poorly produced. He may also talk very ungrammatically leaving out function words such as "if" "and" or "but", so that his speech sounds like a telegram. He may have the same gaps in his comprehension of spoken language.

RECEPTIVE dysphasia results if there is damage in Wernicke's area in the temporal region of the brain. The person with this damage is almost the exact opposite of a Broca's asphasic. His speech may be faster than normal. He will talk a great deal with a normal melody of speech. The sounds will be correct and the grammar normal. The abnormality here is the extreme difficulty he has to find the right word (particularly nouns) and produces many roundabout descriptions. When trying to say "flower" he may talk about "the thing that grows out there" pointing to the garden. He may use totally unrelated words and even produce words that do not exist (jargon speech). He is unable to monitor his own speech or understand the sounds he hears from others.

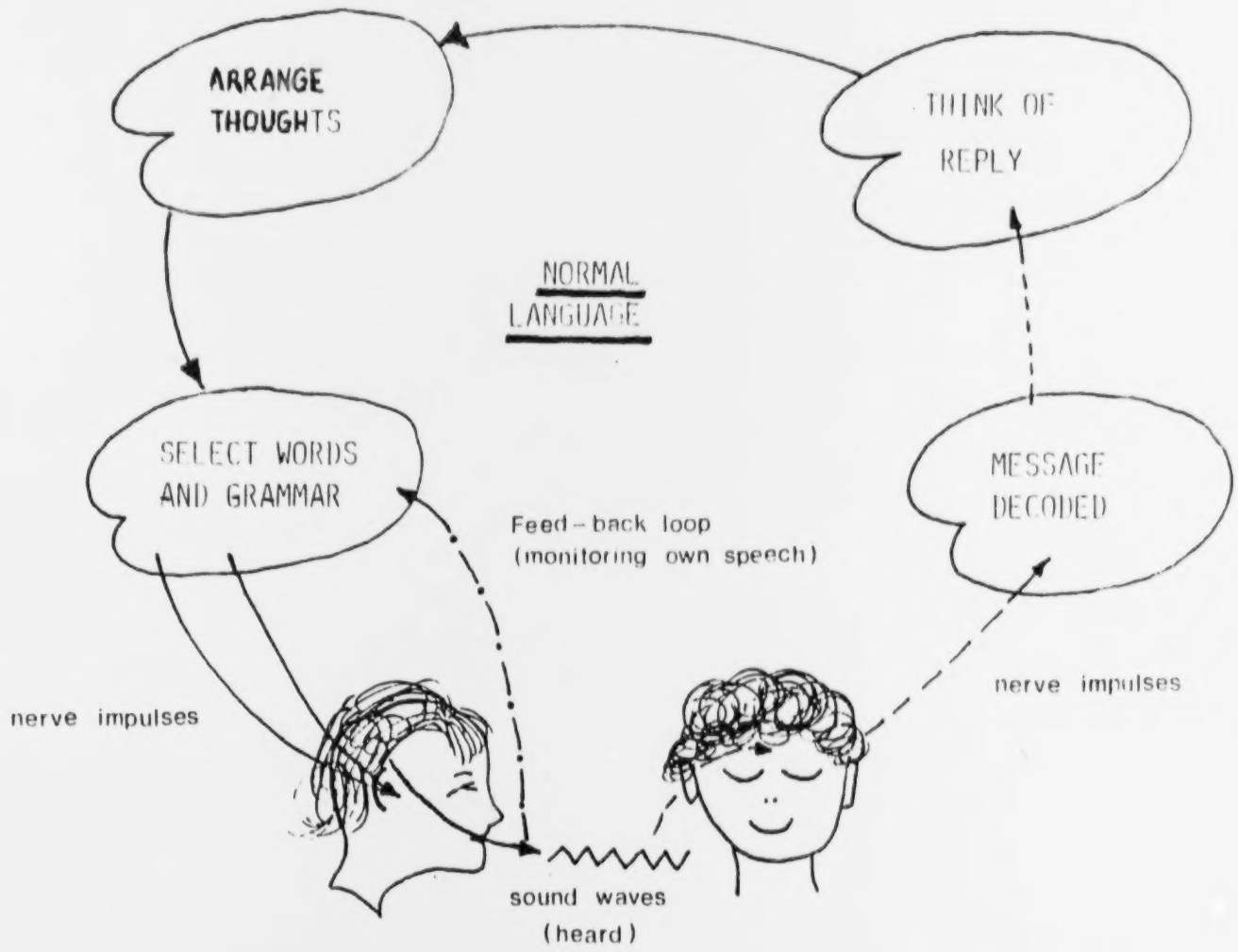
It is often the case that disorders of spoken language will be accompanied with reading and writing difficulties, known as acquired dyslexia and dysgraphia. It is quite possible for a dysphasic adult to be able to read and understand a written sentence but yet be unable to read it aloud. There are more puzzling cases in which a dysphasic has profound reading problems yet no writing difficulties. Neurologists have found that this difficulty arises if there is damage to the tissue that joins the two cerebral hemispheres of the brain together (corpus collosum). The visual information remains locked in the right hemisphere and cannot be relayed to the language areas for articulation.

Although there is no doubt that the left hemisphere dominates our facility of language the contribution of the right hemisphere cannot be discounted. This

SPEECH CHAIN

SPEECH

UNDERSTANDING



ALL PARTS OF THIS CHAIN ARE INTERDEPENDENT

INVOLVES BOTH LANGUAGE CENTRES AND AUDITORY SKILLS

Fig. 2

hemisphere doesn't produce speech but it does contain a very small language centre which can summon up non-verbal associations with words if the main language centres of the brain are damaged. This gives rise to the "near-misses" in reading, so common amongst dysphasics. (Appendix 3 page II)

RECOVERY

It is important to remember that some degree of spontaneous recovery is possible following a stroke which may be evident up to two years after the trauma. It is a medical fact that stimulation of the brain will not increase the risk of further strokes. It is also well known that the brain does not regenerate cells lost or damaged by strokes or head injuries.

However the remaining cells can produce new connections or receptor sites which will enable electrical signals or messages to be transmitted by devious routes and involve the SILENT AREAS of the brain not previously thought to be involved. If a dysphasic person is sufficiently determined to communicate he will re-learn those skills. What matters to him is not how well he communicates but the fact that he can – by whatever means possible.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND DYSPHASIA

The involvement of ABE with dysphasics is a comparatively recent development and documentation about the relative success or failure of different teaching approaches is somewhat limited if indeed it exists at all. This project is no different and we have no statistical evidence to substantiate our claims.

The transition of Adult Literacy to Adult Basic Education 8 years ago saw the beginnings of a change of emphasis regarding adult education. This broader brief enabled us to look towards areas of community education that had previously fallen between the Adult Literacy scheme and traditional Adult Education.

One factor has remained constant in ABE – that is the vital role played by volunteer tutors. Being a form of remedial education, ABE necessitates one-to-one and small group teaching situations. Since a high ratio of tutors to students is presupposed and such schemes operate at the margin of local education authority budgets, trained volunteer tutors play a significant role in the successful operation of the service.

There are many who believe that dysphasia therapy should be the province of medical personnel and consequently have severe reservations about the development of such a scheme. They will argue that education is not a proper discipline to be concerning itself with such matters and that the background of educationalists and lay persons does not prepare them to deal with this complex clinical problem.

Hutchinson of the National Institute for Adult Education has given a definition of adult education which is very far removed from the rather narrow and outdated view generally held by many "... all responsibly organised opportunities which enable men and women to enlarge and interpret their own living experience". On this basis, then, the provision of dysphasia therapy within an educational context is valid, but consideration must be given to the repercussions of organising such schemes under the umbrella of the Adult Basic Education Service.

USING VOLUNTEERS

For reasons outlined earlier, ABE services in England and Wales are only viable because of the involvement of volunteer tutors. This raises a political point since some of those wishing to see the development of better professional services of various kinds may fear that the involvement of volunteers gives policy makers an excuse for failing to provide greater financial resources (e.g. increasing Speech Therapy provision). In fact educationalists involved in dysphasia therapy through Adult Basic Education are vigorous in their promotion of speech therapy services, which their schemes are designed not to supplant but to augment

and a liaison with speech therapists is actively sought.

Apart from the political issues, the efficacy of professional dysphasia therapy is still a matter of hot debate even within the medical profession. Hopefully we can look forward to some better scientific studies in the future. In the meanwhile, while we patiently await the results of such studies, can we reasonably expect dysphasic people and their families to do the same? It is in the area of long-term pastoral care and re-education that society fails the victims of disabling brain damage and neglects the heavy burdens imposed indefinitely on their families. At worst dysphasics may find themselves explicitly written off, at best they may have limited rehabilitation from the NHS in the form of speech therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

Our academic assertions that the efficacy of therapy remains unproven will not satisfy the potential consumers. They will continue to search for help with or without us and I believe we owe it to them to co-operate in this venture.

The value of using volunteer tutors remains to be tested experimentally but the system we have in the Rhymney Valley project has the potential for providing services for dysphasic adults not currently available elsewhere.

It is based on a view of dysphasia as being much more than a linguistic problem. The first question to be answered is how adequately non-scientists and lay persons can grasp the concepts involved in dysphasia. In a recent medical study it was reported that one of the most frustrating aspects of the scheme was trying to educate volunteers about the nature of dysphasia. ABE has special expertise here – after all, the education of adults is our business. Although ABE provision in the Rhymney Valley as elsewhere, was originally concerned only with the remediation of literacy skills, it has since developed to meet the needs of other groups as previously mentioned. At each stage volunteers have been trained to understand the particular problems of their students, so local expertise in the training of volunteers to deal with special needs has built up. In the case of the dysphasia project, my own background in science, medicine and education means that I am well placed to educate both myself and others about the condition.

One great advantage of a local voluntary scheme is its flexibility. Dysphasic adults often miss speech therapy appointments because of transport difficulties or illness and informal arrangements with volunteers can be adjusted to such problems much more readily. Flexibility is also available in terms of the type of environment which can be provided. It is well established in ABE that providing a positive adult environment aids learning considerably. ABE schemes are able to provide whatever medium suits the individual: a person may begin by receiving home visits then progress to classes, but still working on a one-to-one basis, finally group work may be incorporated when the individual is ready for it. Thus a variety of social environments becomes available to the individual within the community but nevertheless understanding and accepting of his or her difficulties. Providing conditions which optimize performance is likely in turn to have a positive effect on motivation.

STUDENT TUITION

This theme of treating dysphasic people as individuals is central to the ABE philosophy. Frequently someone who suffers from unexpected and severe disability is plunged into depression, lethargy and helplessness and all too easily becomes a passive patient whose condition is managed by professionals.

Progress towards becoming a well functioning member of society again is perhaps further exacerbated by the "does-he-take-sugar" syndrome. In the Rhymney Valley Scheme those who come for help are not regarded as patients but as students or clients, who play an active part in deciding what suits them best: whether to work individually or in groups, at home or in class, which volunteers they prefer to

work with and which particular activities and subject matter they prefer. Indeed whether to come, or remain, involved in the scheme at all.

This great individualisation of treatment programmes is another reason for the involvement of trained volunteer tutors, as an enormous amount of preparation is necessary. Each student's particular linguistic and numeracy problems are analysed: a speech therapist's report may be available and is used in conjunction with other tests (including a screening test I developed for use by volunteers) and interviews with relatives. The particular problems and interests of the student then determine which activities and materials are used, these frequently have to be prepared specially and the volunteers provide a diverse pool of interests and expertise, which maximises the chances of matching up a student with a volunteer with shared interests. A further likely advantage lies in the fact that the volunteers provide a variety of speech models.

There are many advantages in organising schemes similar to ours through Adult Basic Education. Firstly there is an existing nationwide network of services, with a parent body (The Adult Literacy and Basic skills Unit) through which information and expertise can be disseminated. Secondly although ABE was originally set up to remediate literacy skills, it has since developed to meet the needs of other groups, such as those with numeracy problems, the hearing impaired, foreigners learning English and the mentally handicapped; thus expertise has built up in training professional and volunteer tutors to deal with a variety of special needs and in setting up and maintaining appropriate education programmes. (N.B. ABE is probably the only existing service with experience in the remediation of numeracy skills in adults.) Thirdly some dysphasics may regard it as nearer to normality and less of a stigma to attend sessions at a local college or community centre rather than a hosptial.

METHODOLOGIES

So far, I have argued that ABE may have an important role to play in providing services for dysphasic people but there still remains an important issue. Given that dysphasia specialists cannot agree on the nature of dysphasia and its remediation what methods should Adult Basic Education adopt?

Our scheme is still very much in its infancy and I do not pretend to have any set educational prescriptions for each case that is presented. I see dysphasia therapy as an on-going developing discipline and I am open-minded as to what approaches to take. I freely admit to having a magpie-like approach using what ever methods seem appropriate for a particular student at a particular time for a particular purpose.

CASE STUDIES

Before concluding, the following anecdotal examples are included to give the flavour of the Rhymney Valley project and to illustrate the kinds of ways (other than strictly linguistic) in which a voluntary scheme of this nature can help individuals.

RON – an engineer and very practical man was rendered an expressive dysphasic and hemiplegic by a stroke, in his mid thirties. He has learned to write with his non-preferred hand, use a calculator again. He learned the vocabulary necessary to order the building materials needed to complete the house he was building at the time of his stroke. He has been with us for 6 years and continues to astound us with his progress. He willingly participates at training courses by explaining the many problems that beset dysphasics.

TEENA – became dysphasic and hemiplegic in her mid thirties. She was very withdrawn and self conscious initially and lacked support and stimulation from her immediate family. She was taught to write with her non-preferred hand and now keeps the class coffee funds. The class is the highlight of her week and volunteers provide transport for her when necessary.

ANN – rendered an expressive dysphasic and hemiplegic by a stroke in her mid

forties. Pre-trauma she was fluent in 3 languages, a keen sportswoman and deputy head of a large comprehensive school. She has learned to drive an adapted automatic car. The neurologist who had to certify her intellectual competence would not permit her to write down answers to his questions. She feared that she would no longer be permitted to drive which she likened to being "put in prison". She asked me to write to the neurologist explaining that she had difficulty in initiating verbalisations and used written letters as a cueing device. Ann was granted her licence and has driven all over the country. Two years ago following weeks of preparation in classes, she was word perfect at her wedding ceremony.

HORACE – aged 75 and a stalwart of his local choir was becoming depressed because his stroke had turned him into a letter-by-letter reader (surface dyslexia). This meant he could not learn the words of his new songs. His progress through rehabilitation was clearly too slow to solve his immediate problem. The musician husband of one of the volunteers put the words and piano accompaniments on tape which enabled Horace to learn the songs aurally and remain in his choir.

LIONEL – became dysphasic in his late thirties unable to speak or write and showed great emotional distress when he first attended classes. A former engineer he is now re-developing his mathematical skills, displays his sense of humour and is the class expert on Makaton sign language, learned from his speech therapist.

Humour incidentally is considered an important ingredient in rehabilitation in the Rhymney Valley project. Its probable value and underuse in clinical settings has been noted by Foot (1986) and it has been demonstrated that exposure to laughter can improve the linguistic performance of dysphasics (Potter and Goodman 1983).

CONCLUSIONS

People suffering from dysphasia and other forms of communication difficulty, by the very nature of their acquired handicap are often unable to plead their case for a better understanding of the difficulties facing them or indeed to ask for tuition. The entry of ABE into this specialised field is a fairly recent development. Its success can already be seen by the increasing number of referrals to the classes and by local, national and international requests for help and information.

No statistical evidence is available to prove the efficacy of our re-education programmes, nor is there any real scientific proof that medical therapy is effective. However the evidence is suggestive that this specialised tuition for dysphasics can work under the right circumstances and that ABE has a particular role to play in catering flexibly for individual needs within the community, taking account of the whole person and not just the linguistic deficit.

The responsible organisation of such schemes necessitates the breaking down of interdisciplinary barriers and we have achieved this at a local level in the Rhymney Valley. On a national level the educationalists and medical profession are beginning to work together, having recently formed H.I.R.E. (Head Injury Re-Education) in association with HEADWAY. This organisation aims to form a national body for educational provision for all age groups of head-injured people while in hospital and during rehabilitation and to provide training and resources for both professional and volunteer staff.

Perhaps the interdisciplinary friendships that have been made at this conference will go a long way towards the formation of new schemes that will provide more dysphasics with the chance to re-learn the basic skills of language within the framework of Adult Basic Education.

By combining our individual talents and expertise, perhaps we can at least give more people HOPE and help them to realise that there can be life after strokes and head injuries.

APPENDIX 1

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE ABNORMALITIES ARISING FROM HEAD INJURY

1 DYSPHASIA – disorder of language
– possible difficulties with reading
writing
spelling
comprehension
numeracy

2 DYSARTHRIA – physical disorder
– nerve supply to musculature of articulation (mouth and tongue) inadequate
– possible difficulties with swallowing

3 DYSPRAXIA – disorder of sequencing

possible difficulties with:–

– sequencing articulatory movements
– sounds within words
– words within sentences
– logical formation of ideas

APPENDIX 2

LITERACY AND NUMERACY PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH DYSPHASIA

There are two main types of dysphasia

1 EXPRESSIVE – damage in Broca's area
an exaggerated tip-of-the-tongue condition.

Possible difficulties in EXPRESSING spoken language

– selecting ideas
– recalling words/numbers (semantics)
Telegram speech – initiating conversation
– using correct grammar (syntax)

Associated WRITING difficulties

– learning to use non-preferred hand (if hemiplegic)
– deciding what is to be conveyed
– selecting appropriate words and grammar
– breaking down words into individual letters by recall or translating phonetics into written symbols (spelling)

2 RECEPTIVE – damage in Wernicke's area

possible difficulty in UNDERSTANDING spoken word

- understanding accompanying factors:– facial expression, gesture, tone
- understanding each individual word in sentence (semantics)

jargon speech

- understanding grammatical construction and order of words
- monitoring own speech

Associated READING difficulties

- anticipating content (using punctuation and context
- understanding and recognising pattern of common words (semantics)
- analysing words phonically
- understanding grammar/order of words in a sentence (syntax)

APPENDIX 3

Dyslexia

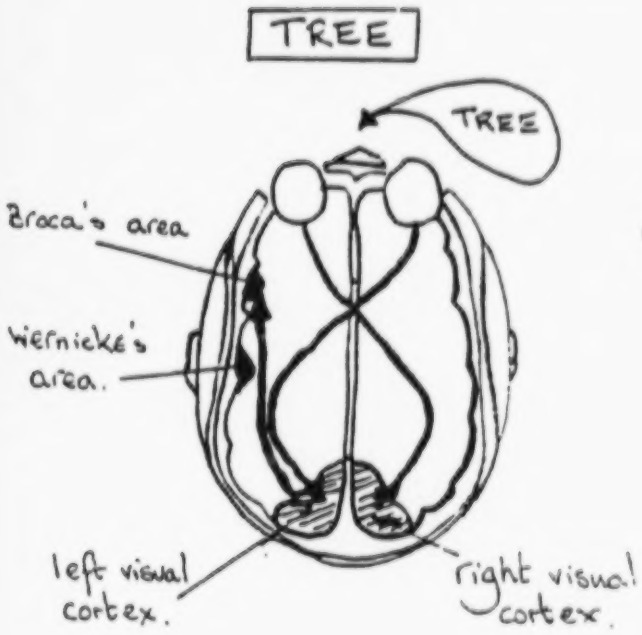
Word blindness resulting from a stroke.

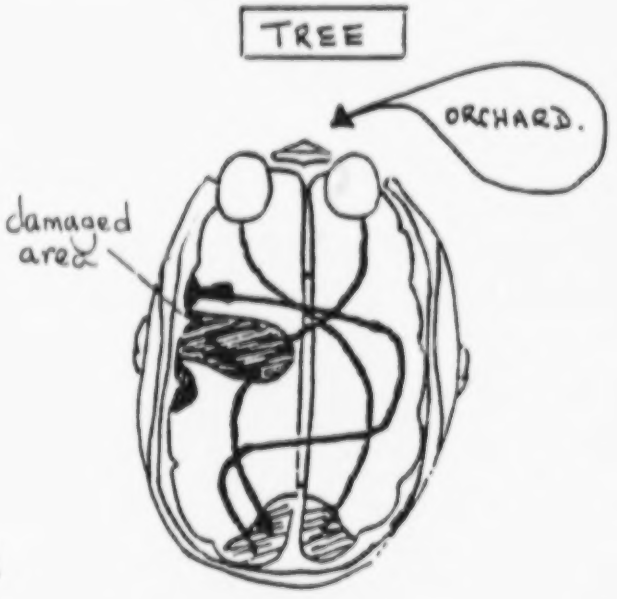
DYSLEXIA

ACQUIRED – following strokes or brain trauma

DEEP DYSLEXIA	SURFACE DYSLEXIA
1 Can read "concrete" nouns	1 Using individual letter sounds for reading
2 Trouble with function words e.g. in, and.	2 Confusion with letter recognition
3 Semantic errors e.g. reading TREE for bush	3 Loss of sequence which deals with whole words
4 Can't read non-words e.g. COBE	
↓	↓
TUITION REQUIRED	
1 Re-teach phonic rules	1 Try to restore visual recognition of word bank: using word/ picture pairs, flash cards
2 Use of function words	2 Positive identification of letters

Possible explanation for "near misses" with reading





NORMAL BRAIN

1 Word "tree" is seen

2 Transferred to visual cortex on both sides

3 Understanding and recall of word in language centres

4 "Correct" choice made and word "tree" read aloud

DEEP DYSLEXIA

1 Word "tree" seen

2 Transferred to visual cortex

3 Information going back to language centres is blocked by damage in left hemisphere

4 Transferred to right hemisphere

5 Non-verbal associations e.g. memory or pictures of woods

6 Back to language centre for conversion to speech

7 Word has changed. SEMANTIC ERROR

APPENDIX 4

HOW YOU CAN HELP A DYSPHASIC ADULT

1 Speak meaningfully and clearly.
2 Don't give too much information at once.
3 Don't shout – he's not deaf.
4 Assume he understands everything.
5 Assume he understands nothing.
6 He has normal intelligence, talk directly to him.
7 Give time to respond, even if only yes or no.
8 Don't jump in too quickly with the answer, encourage him to continue.
9 Never finish a sentence for him unless he asks/indicates he would like help.
10 Maintain eye contact.
11 Use gesture, writing, drawing and verbal cueing to aid communication.
12 Work towards a goal, no matter how small and always try to end on a high/positive note.
13 Think about ABILITY and not disability.
14 Relate all work to his own needs and interests.
15 Admit that you do not understand (if relevant). Pretending that you do only leads to more confusion and frustration.

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BOOK LIST

"A Time to Speak"	Valerie Eaton Griffith et al. Price 3 pounds available from CHSA
"Learning Again"	A guide to helping dysphasic adults with basic communication skills. Available from ALBSU. Price 2 pounds 20
"Living after a Stroke"	Diana Law and Barbara Paterson Approx. 5 pounds. Souvenir Press (E+A) Ltd
"A Stroke in the Family"	Valerie Eaton Griffith Approx. 5 pounds, Wildwood House, London (1975)
"Stroke – the facts"	Clifford Rose and Rudy Capildeo Oxford University Press (1981)
"Activities and Ideas" (loose-leaf binder with ideas for games etc. for individuals or groups.)	Jayne Comins, Felicity Hurford and Judith Simms (1983) Winslow Press 23 Horn Street Winslow Buckingham, MK 18 3 AP
"Clinical management of memory problems"	Edited by Barbara Wilson and Nick Moffat. Publ. Croom Helm

TEACHING READING IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (ABE) CONTENT AREAS

LAURA S. JOHNSON

Public education in the United States is undergoing extensive review. The publication in 1983 of Nation at Risk, a report by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, summarizes the need for reform in reading, writing, social studies, science, and mathematics especially for students in the elementary and secondary schools. But the ripple effect of the report seems likely to become a wave in its implications for all levels of education, including Adult Basic Education (ABE) and General Educational Development (GED). As such, the report requires a response from all persons involved in U.S. education; policy makers, administrators, teachers, students, and parents. Each needs to take a new look at what he is doing and ask, "How can I improve the quality of the education of the people for whom I am responsible?"

A Nation at Risk cites the necessity for a 21st century work force to be able to read and comprehend at the 12th grade level, as compared with being able to respond similarly at the 5th grade level, a measure which has been considered "literate" since World War I. If you were to ask today's employer what he considers "literate" for a future employee, he could well say, "The Future is now. I needed literate workers yesterday."

A recent issue of the newsletter for the Business Council for Effective Literacy supports these statements:[1]

A major 1980 study by researcher Larry Mikulecky of Indiana University found that 70 percent of the reading material in a cross section of jobs is between 9th and 12th grade level in difficulty, and 15 percent is even higher. Yet other work by Mikulecky suggests that 1 out of every 5 present U.S. workers reads below 8th grade level – and 1 out of every 8 reads only at 4th grade level.

This inability of American workers to read at a functional level is just one of the problems addressed by the Commission. Another equally serious concern deals with the individual's inability to understand and process what he has read. Employees need not only to know how to read but also how to think, how to solve problems, and how to make decisions. The report states that a "rising tide of mediocrity" is engulfing the nation's schools, "threatening our very future as a nation and a people."[2] It lists many areas in which improvements must be made. The two with which we are concerned in this discussion are (1) upgrading the content of our instructional materials and (2) giving our students opportunities to practise improving the higher level thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

The extent to which U.S. education generally, and U.S. cultural literacy specifically, is of national concern can best be illustrated by noting that two books on the New York Times Best Seller List for the past year address these problems. Usually best sellers deal with crime, sex, and money, but these two books plead for reforms in U.S. education. I refer to The Closing of the American Mind by Allan Bloom and Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know, by E.D. Hirsch, Jr.

My participation in this call for reform in American education occurs with two groups of adults: men and women who read below the 8th grade level, enrolled in Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes; and men and women who read above this level, enrolled in General Educational Development (GED) classes so they can obtain a certificate which is the equivalent of a high school diploma. Students can obtain this certificate by passing a national

test, familiarly known as "The GED" in Reading, Composition, Literature, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science.

Students can prepare for this test by (1) enrolling (sometimes for several years, depending on the regularity of their attendance as well as the capacity of their intellectual ability) in Adult Basic Education classes; or (2) by integrating their life/work experiences with the high school level review courses in the subjects on which they will be tested. The current GED Test is derived from tests first developed by the U.S. Armed services during World War II for military personnel. This test is revised every ten years; its latest revision, effective 1988, incorporates many of the recommendations of the report, A Nation at Risk.

Once students have obtained a GED certificate, many doors, formerly closed, are open. Some get job promotions; others go on for more formal education from trade schools, colleges, and universities.

Most ABE students, and all GED students, eagerly seek the GED certificate. It is a prize all want to win, that all need to win if they are to have any hope at all of getting off welfare rolls, out of unemployment, or into work other than dead-end jobs. Even those who enter at the pre-primer level dream of passing the GED. Some few will make it; some few will be able to stay long enough to go all the way. These few will have the motivation, the intellectual ability, and the kind of support from family, friends, and school required to pursue the lengthy course of study required for certification.

But even those in ABE who do not obtain the certificate will know more, when they leave, about the society in which they live. They will have achieved not only survival skills, but also a relationship to mainstream American culture because of exposure to substance in the content areas of literature, social studies, science, and mathematics. We hope, too, that they will have learned how, as literate parents, they can contribute significantly toward having literate children.

In most instances, ABE is where most of the adults in our program begin, many of whom will advance quickly into the GED program. Most are from large minority groups in our area – Blacks and Hispanics from the Caribbean and Latin America. All want to get ahead. They are all very highly motivated; their expectations are high. This is why what happens in ABE is so important for what needs to happen, not only for those who will not go on to the GED classes, but for those who will become GED graduates. Stated mathematically, one can say that ABE is to GED what the elementary school is to the secondary school.

So we endeavor from the very beginning levels in ABE to include content in addition to teaching survival skills. We include units in literature, social studies, and science. We also have regular mathematics classes every time we meet. We teach reading in all of these classes – how to read the specific content of a subject – because students need to read to obtain information in all of the content areas.

I became acutely aware of the Significance of A Nation at Risk to ABE and GED programs in 1985, when literature on the revised test became available, as I compared the kind of preparation necessary for passing the current test with the revised test. The 1988 version incorporates some of the ideas which the Commission report lists as needed reforms for improving all aspects of American education. Students must have more substance in the content areas, and they need to be able to think critically, using higher level thinking skills.[3] A tabulation by the American Council on Education indicates some of the differences between the two tests.[4]

WHAT ARE THE CHANGES IN READING DIFFICULTY?

Percentage of Items on Current and 1988 GED Test at Various Cognitive Levels

Cognitive Level	Current Tests	1988 Tests
Knowledge	15%	0%
Comprehension	55%	20%
Application	15%	30%
Analysis	10%	30%
Evaluation	5%	20%

Translating this need for change into what goes on in the classroom, you will note the major differences occur in percentages for the higher level thinking skills of application, analysis, and evaluation. This tells us that ABE students, who are often the feeder classes into GED, must have not only more content in their subject areas; they must also have more opportunity to practice using higher level, or critical, thinking skills. This requires re-structuring of both the materials and the methods we have traditionally used in ABE classes.

I would like to discuss briefly with you how we can do this, and show you as we work together how to simulate the reading process so that it involves the various levels of thinking skills, a procedure which will be beneficial not only in school but out of it as well. Until the Commission's report was produced, students generally were not required to use higher level thinking skills. Most materials and methods required only thinking and responding on the literal level which, though necessary as a basis for using the other levels, is the least interesting and the easiest to forget – simply because the literal has no input from the student.

But no more will this be sufficient.

Fortunately, ABE and GED teachers do not have to invent new methods for upgrading the reading/thinking process. These methods have been available for more than thirty years; they have just not been used very much.

In 1956 Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain[5] presented a theoretical description of the various phases of thinking with the elements arranged in an hierarchical format. The six phases are:

1. Knowledge: acquisition of facts, details, information
2. Comprehension: translation and interpretation
3. Application: putting concepts to use in a real setting
4. Analysis: breaking things down into component parts
5. Synthesis: putting things together and naming the relationships
6. Evaluation: making judgements according to some criteria

Herber[6] has compressed these six phases into three levels of comprehension in the following manner:

1. Literal level: knowledge (What does it say?)
2. Interpretive level: comprehension (What does it mean?)
3. Applied level: application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation (How can you use it?)

Let us begin our practice of simulating the reading process, which requires us – and our students – to use higher level thinking skills, by reading a short selection from Travel By Air? This passage is written on about a 2-3rd grade reading level, and I would use it not only with students who could read at that level, but also with those on the pre-primer or 1st grade level. But, you ask, how can you use difficult reading material like this with students who can't read it? I answer, for those who cannot read, I will read it to them, or have them listen to it on a tape. Their reading vocabulary may be limited, but their listening vocabulary is not. They know a great deal about travel by air, so they are capable of responding to a reading selection about it. You can do for adult non-readers what you would do for child non-readers. Read to them. For several years children have a listening vocabulary considerably beyond their reading vocabulary. The same is true for adult

non-readers. If you do not have time to read to your adults, use tapes. You can make your own, use volunteers to make tapes, or purchase commercial tapes. I use all three methods.

Your initial step is to choose a reading selection with which your students have some knowledge. By selecting reading that is familiar to them, you enable them at once to feel worthy. Immediately, even if they cannot read, they are able to contribute something to the class. They can perform because they know something. They are part of the curriculum. This is important to them because many illiterate adults enter ABE classes, fearful and distrustful of a system which has usually been a disappointment to them in the past. By the time they enter an adult class, they are different from when they left school years ago.

Usually an adult's re-entry is based on a significant – often a traumatic – event that propels him/her back into the classroom.[8] Perhaps it is unemployment, underemployment, a change in marital status – whatever the circumstance, for the returning adult this is a "teachable moment,"[9] and you can make the most of it by tuning in to what the student already knows.

Begin your reading lesson in **Travel By Air**, for example, by drawing students into a discussion of what they already know about air travel. This should lead to something, eventually, about what they do not know about it, establishing a purpose for reading. Write the students' responses on the blackboard or the overhead. Later, when the lesson is finished, students can check their initial responses with their new information, thus assimilating the two and expanding their knowledge generally about travel by air.

Also important, before you begin reading the selection to the class, introduce any vocabulary the students may not know.

When you have finished reading, divide the students into groups of 3-5 and ask them to discuss the following statements from the reading guide. You will need to read the statements, if your students cannot read, and give them time to discuss them before you make checks on the board or overhead as the students direct their responses to you. Students also need to provide evidence or reason for their answers. By engaging in this kind of discussion, they are analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing. They are thinking about what they have read or heard read, something they do not do when they produce answers to only literal questions or statements.

SOCIAL STUDIES HEADING GUIDE[10]
ABE Level 1

Read or listen to a tape of pages 8-9 in **Travel by Air**. Then read, or listen to the following statements on tape, and make a check by any statement you decide is information in this text. You may work in groups and discuss your answers before you make the checks.

Literal Comprehension Level:

1. People first attempted to fly in gliders.

2. Gliders could take off from any place.

3. A German built the first hang glider.

4. He controlled the direction of the glider by swinging his body.

5. The Wright Brothers improved gliders by adding a gas engine.

6. In 1903 at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, Orville Wright made the first powered flight.

7. It lasted an hour and he flew a mile.

Interpretive Comprehension Level:

Discuss the following statements with your classmates and put a check by any meaning you believe is suggested but not stated in the story.

1. In the late 1700's it was impossible for a glider to be powered by an engine.

2. Otto Lilienthal was a daring man.

3. Wilbur and Orville Wright were mechanics.

4. The Wright Brothers were pioneers.

Applied Comprehension Level:

Using facts from the text and your knowledge about flying, check the following statements which you can support. Give reasons for your beliefs.

1. The airplane has shrunk the earth to the size of a global Village.

2. Hot-air ballooning is a popular sport.

If possible, students should reach consensus on each statement, though this is not required. Aiming toward consensus, however, will produce persuasive responses which should draw all students into the discussion. Thus is the process of reading simulated. What happens as students read, or listen to a reading, is that they become actively involved. They have to think. They cannot remain passive; they will go back and read again to check a point. They will analyze evidence for their answers as well as those of classmates; they will evaluate their evidence; they will synthesize and arrive at a meaning which can be applied beyond the material they have read. The one level on which all students need to agree is the literal level; its facts are the basis for the rest of the discussion.

It is this lack of facts on which to base further knowledge so that the higher level thinking skills can be used that is so woefully described in A Nation at Risk, and which Allan Bloom and Hirsch emphasize as lacking in current U.S. education. Thus the first requisite for change in ABE is established; we must include more substance in the content areas. So we believe even beginning adult readers need more than survival skills. Introduce them to literature, social studies, and science by readings in these content areas which relate to what they already know.

The second requisite for change in ABE content areas is giving students practice in using higher level thinking skills. Reading guides, such as that used with Travel By Air, will do this. There are many advantages to using this instructional method for teaching reading on all grade levels in all of the content areas.

The most important is that it gets the student involved in the learning process. He becomes an active reader because he has to think in order to respond. And he likes to respond. He wants to give evidence for his position; he can tell how the new information he has acquired fits a similar situation. He achieves a sense of empowerment as he discovers that he has ideas that count. Even if he is not able to read yet, he has contributed just as well as someone who can read.

According to Friere, this sense of empowerment is as important to the beginning reader as his ability to learn to read. "The concept of empowerment also leads to a process in which students come to think of themselves as sources of knowledge, as problem solvers, as experts in their own fields of interest (Timpson, 1988)."[11]

When teachers use Herber's method for teaching reading in ABE content areas, they not only teach reading in those subjects, they also bring to life a student's desire to become actively involved in the ramifications of contact with information. Students measure this new against the old and then integrate it into experience which gives unit and coherence to living. It extends the man or woman a bit more; each has become more in that day than he or she was the day before.

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ERIC BOARDMAN

As our Chairperson has outlined to you, my background comes from my work in the A.T.C. at the Qld. Deaf Society. The Adult Training Centre (A.T.C.) is but one section of the Society whose overall philosophy is to provide the maximum access to the highest level of independence and support realistic to each individual. As well as general administration and provision of Community Welfare and interpreting services, the Society is heavily committed to providing a service to a small group of deaf adults with other disabilities.

The population

Below, I have outlined briefly the compositional breakdown of the population's primary and secondary disabilities based on the Government Statitician model

Primary

Fig 1

	DEGREE OF DISABILITY			
TYPE OF DISABILITY	MILD	MOD.	SEV.	PROF.
PHYSICAL	-	-	-	-
SENSORIAL	-	3	4	37
PSYCHIATRIC	-	-	-	-
OTHER	-	-	-	-

Secondary

Fig 2

	DEGREE OF DISABILITY			
TYPE OF DISABILITY	MILD	MOD.	SEV.	PROF.
PHYSICAL	7	3	2	-
SENSORIAL	4	1	-	-
PSYCHIATRIC	1	-	-	-
PSYCHOLOGICAL	3	-	-	-
OTHER	2	-	-	-

The above tables give primary and secondary disabilities only and do not include intellectual handicap. It should be noted though, that the majority of clients have either a mild to moderate intellectual handicap or display some learning disability.

Diagnosis of disability types and degree will tend to vary from individual to individual as each service provider brings their own system of appraisal to the program.

The Program

In devising an educational program for any group, it is important to draw upon some model with which to reduce the plethora of questions to a manageable level. Thus will the program tend to be ordered, sequential and meet its projected goals. One such model used in the following program is –

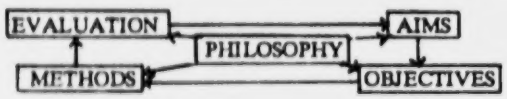

Fig. 3

Each major decision affects and relies upon the overall philosophy of the program. As each decision is made it will subsequently affect the following decision and thus will it spiral as the clients' abilities develop in line with the overall philosophy.

I have already outlined to you the philosophy of the Society so will therefore proceed to the 4 major decision areas.

Aims

The aims of the literacy program are –

- To develop the basic skills of literacy required for their day to day living and working needs.
- To expand their knowledge of the written, spoken, signed language found in their immediate environment.
- To provide learning materials and situations designed to facilitate the development of literal skills appropriate to the needs and abilities of each individual.

Objectives

LIST OF OBJECTIVES - LANGUAGE/LITERACY PROGRAMME

LEVEL 1

1. Identifies signs on a basic level.
2. Performs simple visual/perception skills correctly.
3. Writes own name.
4. Uses sign on a basic level (Sheets A, B).
5. Identifies words for everyday objects (Sheets A, B).
6. Can match up sign, word and object/action (Sheet A, B).

LEVEL TWO

7. Knows and writes own age and birthday.
8. Knows and writes own work and home address.
9. Obeys simple commands prevalent in her/his environment. (Total Communication)
10. Conveys simple needs (Total Communication) [Sheet C].
11. Fills in basic forms.
12. Sequences letters of the alphabet.

LEVEL THREE

13. Reads simple sentences.
14. Uses and writes words for everyday objects.
15. Writes and structures simple sentences.
16. Answers (in written form) simple questions on pictures.
17. Answers (in written form) simple questions on stories. (Total Communication)
18. Answers (in written form) simple questions on simple story. (Written)

LEVEL FOUR

19. Can write original sentences to convey a message or tell a story.
20. Uses language and communication in the "real life situation" e.g. reads newspapers, writes a letter, reads labels etc., with understanding.

You will notice that the above list is split into four levels. Any individual person's mastery of preceding objectives, determines which level he/she is placed in. Each group has a theme or specific objective at any one time and receives training in that area. In the event of a client already possessing mastery of that objective, it is to the discretion of the teacher whether to provide additional training in another area to to use the opportunity to reinforce that objective.

Method

The method of training within a program affects dramatically how well your objectives will be met. Without careful planning of your methodology, the clients will be met. Without careful planning of your methodology, the clients within your program may experience great difficulty coping with the objectives you place before them and in fact those they themselves wish to achieve.

Within a culturally distinct group, such as the deaf, the question of method of communication is emphasised. The language of the deaf is varied and complex and as with most languages, has a number of distinct dialects. In fact, it can be said that each individual has their own accent therefore it is imperative that the teacher or training officer decide either (a) to standardise his/her language, regardless of the student or (b) to become as conversant as possible in the many modes of deaf language. There are cases both for and against each of these methods but this is not the place to expand on them. Suffice to state that the latter is the form adopted within this program, despite the difficulty it presents for the teacher.

The formal name for such a method is total communication, viz. utilising all and any areas at a person's disposal to facilitate meaningful communication.

Class Structure and Size

The majority of instruction is given one to one during brief visits. The average client will attend a literacy program for ½ hour every week. This allows for short concentrated instruction on one particular skill with a minimum of interruptions. This class organisation tends to overcome the fact that in many cases the attention span of the client is relatively short. This short period of instruction time is reinforced within other programs that run on a similar schedule, such as communication, social skills, numeracy, nutrition, independent living skills etc.

Sequencing

The sequence within the program has a very definite trend. The concepts introduced begin with basic ideas and progress to more complex problems and situations.

e.g. – Writes own name
– Writes own work and address
– Writes and structures simple sentences
– Writes original sentences to convey a message or tell a story.

As well as progressing from basic to complex concepts, the instruction technique is also sequenced. Beginning with concrete learning situations, the program moves through to more abstract methods of instruction. The lessons therefore, prompt the client towards using more formal operational thought patterns.

e.g. –	picture	– sign association
–	picture	– word association
–	word	– sign association

One constraint within the instruction methodology is the requirement that everything taught be applicable to their immediate environment / lifestyle. Therefore when practising word recognition, it is imperative that practical words be used such as flour, apple, sugar, house, chair, car, etc.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the program is the first and final step in design and implementation. By addressing this question properly, instructors can obtain sufficient information to enable them to gain insight into ability levels, need areas and the competency of the student. It acts as an ongoing meter for success and failure (of the program not of the student) and therefore helps show direction for change and development.

The evaluation within this program takes three forms –

(A) Student Evaluation
(B) Student Self Evaluation
(C) Program Evaluation

(A) There are three levels of student evaluation each tied to a particular time constraint. At the end of each lesson, a brief perusal of the student's work coupled with an occasional anecdotal comment is placed in the student's file. This acts as an ongoing record of the student's progress and may at times determine individual emphasis within the program. After each 15 week block, the entire A.T.C. closes down in order to evaluate each person's progress through the various programs. In the case of the literacy programs, this is coupled with a study of the B.A.M. sheets (see appendix) which are designed to monitor each person's progress through the level of objectives. For example, Tom is placed in literacy level (1) at the beginning of a block. First he is assessed during week 1 on the sheets provided. If at the end of a block (approx. 3 months) he has acquired mastery in less than half the skills in this level, he is marked B or basic level. If he has acquired mastery in half or more than half of the skills he is marked A or approaching mastery and if he acquired mastery in all of the skills (at times this can be most of the skills dependent on other factors) he is marked M or mastery

in that level.

Tom's progression to the next level of the literacy program is dependent on (a) his overall scored, i.e. either B, A or M and (b) the teacher's report. Please note that each single task as well as the overall level is marked the same way – B, A, M.

Not only does this system provide feedback to both clients and staff, on performance it has proved simple, accurate and easy to administer.

At the end of each year, a comment sheet is filled in pertaining to the student's application to the learning situation and performance through the program (see appendix).

(B) At the end of each block the student is asked to sit down with a pre-selected team in order to draw up their evaluation of the previous block program and their preferences for the up-coming block. These observations are then taken into account during reprogramming week.

(C) Decisions regarding program direction, development and emphasis are determined by the outcomes of the previous two evaluation forms.

I have outlined above but one of the programs within the A.T.C. It, together with the many other programs, is an attempt to provide this group of people the chance to achieve the maximum level of independence possible. It is not always an easy task and in relation to the fully abled person, progress is often slow. But I think you will all agree that the rewards when they do come are great and well worth the hard work.

Thank you.

APPENDIX

LANGUAGE/LITERACY PROGRAMME			
LEVEL ONE:			
1. Identifies signs on a basic level.	M		
2. Performs simple visual/perception skills correctly.	M		
3. Writes own name.	M		
4. Uses signs on a basic level (Sheets A, B)	M		
5. Identifies words for everyday objects (Sheets A, B).	M		
6. Can match up sign, word and object/action (Sheets A, B).	M		
LEVEL TWO:			
7. Knows and writes own age and birthday.	M		
8. Knows and writes own work and home address.	M		
9. Obeys simple commands prevalent in her/his environment. (Total Communication)	M		
10. Conveys simple needs (Total Communication) [Sheet C].	M		
11. Fills in basic forms.			
12. Sequences letters of the alphabet.	M		
LEVEL THREE:			
13. Reads simple sentences.	M		
14. Uses and writes words for everyday objects.	M		
15. Writes and structures simple sentences	M		
16. Answers (in written form) simple questions on pictures.	A		
17. Answers (in written form) simple questions on stories. (Total Communication)	A		
18. Answers (in written form) simple questions on simple story. (Written)	A		
LEVEL FOUR:			
19. Can write original sentences to convey message or tell a story.	A		
20. Uses language and communication in the "real life situation" e.g. reads newspapers, writes a letter, reads labels etc., with understanding.	A		

APPENDIX

CLIENT COMMENT SHEET

NAME _____

SIGNING ABILITY _____

LITERACY SKILLS _____

NUMERACY SKILLS _____

MOST FAVOURED WORK APPROACH _____

RETENTION _____

TRANSFERRAL SKILLS _____

OTHER RELEVANT COMMENTS _____

RECOGNISING, RESPONDING, REMEDYING - THE THREE 'R's
Library and Information Services for people with disabilities

VALERIE MOON

The development of 'library and information services for people with disabilities' has occurred in relatively recent years having begun with the provision of large print materials for people with a visual impairment and the delivery of materials to "homebound" persons. Many people with specific disabilities who have not traditionally used libraries are now becoming regular library users – probably because there is a greater awareness of their special needs..

The development of library and information services to people with special needs has occurred at the same time as some of these special needs have been recognised by other service providers – such as adult literacy provider. Looking back over the proceedings of adult literacy conferences in recent years it is clear that there has been a gradually expanding recognition of the special needs of people with specific disabilities and the attempts to meet these needs can be traced. I believe adult literacy providers and librarians developing services for people with disabilities have a great deal in common.

In my paper I would like to briefly discuss this overlap referring to specific areas such as provision of resources, staff training and staff awareness, and library programmes and outreach. I would also like to share my experiences working with young people who are failing to read – people who may well be the "adult illiterates" of the future.

I have chosen to discuss this in terms of three important "Rs" – recognising, responding, and remedying which I believe we have in common. I would like to think that this discussion might reinforce the work done by so many people in the past in forging links between libraries and adult literacy providers in spite of the increasingly difficult environment in which both libraries and adult literacy providers are working.

When I began to seriously prepare for my participation in this conference I had great difficulty. Not my usual problem of agonising over the first paragraph and trying to establish the "thread" of my discussion – but an absolute mind-block which I could only tackle by asking myself "What do I think I have to say that these (unknown) people will be interested to hear? Have I anything significant to say?" All too quickly the answer seemed to be – "I don't feel as if I have anything significant (or interesting) to say!".

Why did I feel this way? The most obvious reason was because I suddenly realised that I had elected to talk to a room full of experts about a subject on which I am not an expert. My area of expertise (if, indeed, I can claim expertise) is in librarianship – worse (or so it seemed then) it is in the specialised field of library services for people with disabilities!

I looked to the conference title – "Literacy for Living" – for inspiration. Well, I thought, with a minute measure of relief – here's something that we have in common. If literacy means having access to information then I am certainly in the business of 'literacy for living'.

That helped a little but, still not convinced that I had anything worthwhile to say, I decided to read through the proceedings of the various National Conferences of the Australian Council for Adult Literacy held since 1980. I did this to refresh myself on what had been said about libraries and literacy in previous years and what had been said about adult literacy and people with disabilities. I also re-read (with great interest) Audrey N. Grant's report **Opportunity to do Brilliantly: TAFE and**

the challenge of adult literacy provision in Australia. I perceived a trend through the years that no doubt mirrors a social trend – that is, an increasing awareness of the needs of people with disabilities. In **Opportunity to do Brilliantly** Audrey N. Grant describes the "mounting social and political pressure on literacy and other adult education programs to cater for disadvantaged groups, especially for the long-term unemployed and for the mildy intellectually disabled .... pressures (which) demand a redefinition of adult education processes" (p47).

Response to this pressure can be traced through the proceedings of the Annual National Conferences of the Australian Council for Adult Literacy. Back in 1981 (probably remembered best as International Year of the Disabled) there were 22 papers presented at the 5th Annual Conference. Of these, only one referred to disabilities (a record of the experiences of a tutor and her brain-damaged student) and one to libraries (a paper by Lawrie Ryan, on the role of libraries in adult literacy). Two years later, in 1983, disabilities and libraries were neatly bundled into one paper of the 22 presented with an outline of the **National Library of Australia's Services for the Handicapped.** In 1988 (the 12th Annual Conference) the programme indicates that there will be at least eleven papers discussing some aspect of literacy and people with disabilities and, as far as I can see, three papers on some aspect of adult literacy and libraries.

From this reading I began to get a glimmer of how adult literacy services have developed and how my experiences as a librarian responsible for library services for people with disabilities could have some relevance for the audience of a conference on adult literacy. We have, I decided, got more in common than I would have thought – there are, it would seem, more similarities than differences. A moment ago I mentioned the pressures which Adult Literacy providers have responded to – similar pressures have been exerted on public libraries.

To make this clearer I will need to briefly describe my role as Special Needs Consultant with the State Library of New South Wales. For the past four years I have been responsible for providing a consultancy and support service to public libraries in New South Wales and for developing services within the State Library itself for people with disabilities. When I commenced with the State Library of New South Wales, this was a new position and, in terms of its very challenging brief, one without a model. That is not to say that there are no other people in similar positions (few of these are at a State level). The difference is in the level of commitment and support which my position has been given by the State Library of New South Wales. If this position has developed in a meaningful way it is mainly because I work in a very positive environment – I have enjoyed total support and relative autonomy. Within this environment it has been possible to concentrate on what I perceive to be the essentials:

1. **Staff training, awareness raising, community education (Recognising)**
2. **Practical support through the provision of resources and information (Responding)**
3. **Outreach, promotion of services (Remedying)**

Rather than elaborate at this point on these aspects, I will refer back to them later in my paper.

I mentioned earlier that I believe there are more similarities than differences between my perceived role in relation to library services for people with disabilities, and adult literacy provisions. In a practical sense this has been a potential dilemma. For many years before my position was established the State Library had employed a number of Consultants who were responsible for various specialities – a Children's and Young Adult Consultant; an Ethnic Services Consultant; a Technical Services Consultant; and one person who was responsible (among other things) for adult literacy and services to the aged.

Initially I felt some anxiety that the overlap between my role in relation to library services for people with disabilities (which cannot be delineated by age or ethnicity) and the roles of the other, well-established, consultancy positions might cause some difficulties. If problems were to occur, I thought, it would probably be in the area of adult literacy. My desire to avoid this potential problem forced me to try to define my role in relation to adult literacy.

As I tend to take a client-oriented approach, my first thoughts were of the potential clients we might have in common. People with a developmental disability (the term currently in favour to describe people who have an intellectual impairment); hearing impaired people with limited language/vocabulary; people recovering from strokes or accidents (particularly brain damaged people); and learning disabled people.

My second thoughts were in relation to commonality of appropriate resources – high interest/low vocabulary materials; independent living materials; tape-and-text; and other audio materials. It seemed to me that, again, there was no avoiding the overlap. Certainly these materials are part of the central support collection I have developed within the State Library for loan to public libraries and individuals.

My next consideration was of the relative roles public librarians have accepted in relation to these two areas of library services. (I will be referring to public libraries from this point on). It has always seemed to me that librarians have assigned themselves a fairly passive role in relation to adult literacy provisions. In general they appear to have willingly purchased simplified reading materials and, where space permitted, made room for classes to be held in their libraries. A few (does anyone know how many?) librarians have responded to the urging that they become qualified tutors.

In spite of the efforts of many people over the years, the links between librarians and adult literacy providers still appear fairly tenuous. I can, of course, only speak from experience about the situation I have observed in New South Wales. My colleague in the State Library who is responsible for adult literacy consultancy services has a similar view. I recall her telling me that, although she felt that she had attempted to establish strong links with adult literacy providers, it was very much a "one-way street" – that is, the only interaction she had had over the years with adult literacy providers was through contact she initiated. I shared that experience when I first worked in the public library arena (some 10 years ago). I seemed to always be the one making the contact – often with the feeling (realistic or not) that I was being a bit of an interloper. It made it very easy to take a passive role in regard to adult literacy.

Before I left the public library this was rapidly changing. In Lawrie Ryan's 1981 paper he asks the question "...given the large number of people in the community, how does one reach those who are illiterate?" I can well believe in 1981 that very few people walked into a public library and said "I can't read" but, a couple of years later, this was a daily experience in our library (the Wollongong City Library). There are probably many reasons why this was happening at that time – the downturn in the steel industry in the Illawarra region was certainly one reason. Many of the people (mostly men) who were retrenched had to face the fact that without reading and writing skills they would have great difficulty in getting another job. Another identifiable group were parents who found that they could not assist their children with schoolwork because of their own limitations. And another group, with whom I had maintained a strong affiliation from my days in special schools and sheltered workshops, were intellectually impaired people who were gradually being given the opportunity to live independently in the community. Sometimes the people who approached our public library for assistance were already enrolled in TAFE courses and had been advised to go along to the public library for additional reading materials - more frequently they were not

aware that courses existed and needed to be referred to the appropriate contact person.

Of course, this was not happening in isolation to other developments in the public library arena. Libraries were responding to the pressures being put upon them to provide services for the ethnic community (through provision of community language books), for blind as well as visually impaired people (through provision of talking books as well as large print) and to people who could not visit the library in person (through expanded housebound services and services to nursing homes and hospitals). You will note that the emphasis was on provision of materials rather than information – little thought had been given, for instance, to the information needs of people with disabilities and the first realisations that information should be translated into (at the very least) the main community languages were beginning to have some results. There was very little awareness of the needs of deaf and hearing impaired people, stroke victims, people in rehabilitation – the list could go on.

A moment ago I suggested that public librarians appeared to have accepted a fairly passive role in regard to adult literacy services. One of my main concerns as a Consultant on library services for people with disabilities is that librarians (with some very notable exceptions) have also tended to adopt a passive approach to this area of library service also. I believe this was/is mainly because of lack of awareness and partly because of entrenched stereotypes. I still find myself in discussion with public librarians (especially Chief Librarians) who think of library services for people with disabilities as only involving housebound services. It is a similar problem to that encountered when planning access provisions in new buildings with architects. I go in to a planning session with the intention of discussing the fine points of provisions such as flashing lights to alert hearing impaired people of emergencies; lift buttons at appropriate heights for people in wheelchairs; tactile signs for visually impaired people; and so on. I often find I am talking to architects who think that providing adequate access only involves special toilets and ramps. The Chief Librarian who wants only light fiction paperbacks in his library and the architect who thinks only in terms of the regulations pertaining to toilets and ramps, does not lack goodwill – he/she lacks awareness.

In the beginning of this paper I stated my priorities in regard to supporting library services for people with disabilities – staff training and awareness raising; provision of materials; and outreach and promotion. Awareness of the needs of people with a particular disability (Recognising); knowledge about the materials which are suitable to their needs (this knowledge includes special format materials, equipment, and alternative methods of delivering services) (Responding); and outreach and promotion so that people who have not traditionally received a service from a library will know that they can do so (Remedying).

Surely these areas are equally important in adult literacy provisions – awareness of the diverse needs of people who are illiterate (Recognising); knowledge of appropriate materials and programmes (Responding); and outreach to let people who have traditionally not used educational facilities know that there is something there for them (Remedying).

Just as importantly, I believe we have a philosophical base that is similar. Fundamental to an understanding of adult literacy is the belief that literacy is a process of empowering people to take responsibility for their lives and that literacy is concerned with the 'whole person'. These are fundamental principles to the disability movement also – most of the current programs such as independent living programmes, integration of children with disabilities into mainstream schools, assisting older people to remain in their homes with community support rather than being admitted into nursing homes, rehabilitation programmes etc. are concerned with the development and needs

of the "whole person".

Recently I attended the "Pre-Summit" discussions held in New South Wales to discuss the various papers/issues which have been put up for discussion at the proposed National Summit in October. The message coming through very clearly in that discussion was that public libraries should define their client group in terms of "those people not being served by other libraries" and confine their services to these people. The accusation was frequently made "that public libraries have tried to be all things to all people" – to their detriment. The extreme view put forward was that public libraries should not provide course related materials/information for students – it was argued that school, TAFE, College and University libraries are the appropriate agencies to serve students. On the surface there appears to be some logic to this, however, when the same maxim is applied to other clients it begins to get a bit fuzzy.

I must confess I get extremely worried when these views are put forward by people who are perceived as the 'experts' in the library world. I have met several Chief Librarians who would like to see their libraries stocked with only the lightest of recreational materials with little (or no) cataloguing control.

The other major issue in New South Wales at the moment involves the proposed introduction of a $100 enrolment fee for students doing a basic course in TAFE and a $263 fee for Diploma and Associate Diploma courses). So far this fee applies to everyone – no exceptions have been announced. The $100 fee is most likely to affect courses such as Reading and Writing, Women's programmes (N.O.W.), Aboriginal General Skills, Volunteer Tutor Programmes etc. Many people, of course, see the introduction of this fee as the "thin edge of the wedge" – the end result being introduction of full fees for post-school education.

Other proposals being put forward by our new Liberal Government in relation to Education, Health, and Transport provisions are being greeted with a great deal of interest – particularly in the disability movement. I share the general worries about the future of the Richmond Program (de-institutionalisation of people with intellectual disabilities and people with mental health problems); integration of children with disabilities into mainstream schools with the necessary high level of support; de-regulation of nursing homes; and so on.

Before concluding, I would like to briefly talk about another client group we potentially share – that is, children/young people with reading problems. If Adult Literacy providers feel that they might be an endangered species, then I can confidently assure them that this is not for lack of future clients (they may well feel endangered because of economic constraints). I will not attempt an academic discussion in this paper of the reasons why so many young people appear to be failing to read – although, increasingly I am finding this a topic of great interest. In general, public libraries seem to be interacting with young people who are either reluctant to read or who are functionally unable to read. Unfortunately, public librarians cannot act as diagnosticians so, unless there is a known problem (eg slow language development because of a hearing impairment or a condition such as "dyslexia") they can only respond to the individual's expressed needs – sometimes, of course the individual expressing the need is not the young person but a parent or, less frequently, a teacher who has realised that the young person is failing to read. Meeting these needs is usually a matter of trying to provide appropriate materials – this may be in larger than usual print, or through taped material. (I personally am very committed to the book-and-tape approach). From my experience librarians do not usually meet the needs of young reluctant/non-readers through the provision of remedial reading materials.

I believe the reasons why public librarians see so many young reluctant or non-readers are quite different from the reasons why they see (the relatively few) adult literacy

students. A discussion of this topic deserves a paper on its own – one which I would like to see included in a future Adult Literacy Conference.

CONCLUSION

I have touched on a number of issues in this paper which I believe are of mutual concern to those in the adult literacy field and to those providing library services for people with disabilities. My paper is based on the belief that we have much in common – not the least being a desire to enrich people's lives through the independence and self-empowerment that having access to information provides.

THE ADVANTAGES OF THE COMPUTER IN TEACHING ADULT LITERACY

SHERRY HILL HOWIE, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

We live in a multi-literate society in which innovative technology such as the computer must be understood and wisely used to facilitate perpetuation of print literacy. The urgency of print literacy is unique today in that survival depends on it. For illiterate adults, the computer has advantages that traditional technologies of the book, paper and pen do not have. In teaching literacy as problem-solving, certain software may foster development of thinking abilities that are prerequisite to learning reading and writing. The computer, used with caution, can meet adult's needs for independence and socialization and transfer, with guidance, to print literacy.

The Multi-Literate Society

There are those who fear that ours is a post-literate society. They fear that books are being replaced by technology and media. They believe such innovations as computers will replace the need to read books to gain information and to learn. Just as Plato feared in the Phaedrus that the invention of the paper and pen to record ideas would destroy the oral literacy tradition (1961), writers such as Neil Postman (1985) fear that the inventions of television and computers will destroy our print literacy tradition.

We once were predominately a pre-literate society, and will the invention of the Gutenberg printing press, we became primarily literate through the written word. The availability of the computer today, I believe, is changing us to a multi-literate society, one in which we learn and take in information in many different ways. Instead of fearing changes and decrying the passing of traditions, perhaps it is wiser to understand technological innovations and prudently use them to facilitate and perpetuate the values we believe in. In other words, computers as language processors, can be of tremendous benefit in the learning of language processing in reading and writing. The urgency for print literacy today is unique in that approximately 70% of our jobs require a literacy competency. Furthermore, at the rate that information doubles today (every 20 months) and the rate it is projected to double by the year 2000 (every 20 days), print literacy will be a necessity for mere survival. For adults who are illiterate or semi-literate, the computer has many advantages that aid their abilities for later transference to the technologies of the paper and print. With the goal of transference in mind, there is no justification for fearing the demise of the book for primary literacy. In a multi-literate approach the objective is learning through a variety of ways.

The Differences in Technologies

The technologies of the book and paper and pencil appear to differ from the computer in the ways they require users to think and to solve problems. Print offers activities of deductive reasoning that have the reader proceed from general ideas to details in a linear, sequential manner. Such reasoning is prescribed by an author that is restricted to the limits the writer sets. On the other hand, Priscilla Norton (1985) argues that certain software offers the opportunity to think in a different way, one that may be closer to the way adults live and solve problems day by day. Problem-solving software asks a user to reason inductively by experimenting and asking "what-if?" to a problem rather than "if-then" as in cause and effect sequencing in a linear book. The experimenter makes mistakes and learns from them, hypothesizing "what-if?" Seeing patterns and creating patterns and connections allow the computer user to employ synthesis, to determine probabilities, and to

use intuitive reasoning. The user operates in an open system that he or she creates rather than having it down in "black and white" by the author.

An example of such a software program would be "Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego" by Broderbund Publishing. In this simulation, one adults really enjoy, the user becomes a sleuth tracking "criminals" across the world to specific geographic points. During the chase the user refers to an almanac of facts to uncover information about the clues that are provided to the whereabouts of the criminal. The almanac is a paperbound book included with the program that has facts on flags, coins, governments, and all else the sleuth would need to look up. The user formulates patterns to the criminal's behavior, synthesizes information from a variety of sources both video and book, and makes decisions based on inductive logic. The program is recommended for use by groups of adult learners so that it becomes a social experience, as well.

The two systems of thinking are not the dichotomies that Norton presents, though. A reader of books, in the process of reading, asks questions that are "what-if?", not solely "if-then." A reader searches for patterns to the text that exist and synthesizes information. A reader makes guesses and uses intuition to arrive at solutions to the problems the print poses. A reader tests hypotheses and makes mistakes, correcting as more context becomes available. The reader, finally, relies on personal experience and knowledge background to compose the meaning the text suggests. Perhaps the theory should be that what Norton suggests as Computer-Oriented Activities are actually ones that occur during a reading process and then they are validated by engaging in the Print-Oriented Activities:

Print-Oriented Activities

if-then
deductive
linear, sequential
closed system
active

Computer-Oriented Activities

what-if
inductive
patterns and connections
open system
interactive
– adapted from Norton

The point is that both technologies of the book and computer are compatible in problem-solving tasks and may reinforce each other in helping people become literate. The kinds of thinking and problem solving they elicit from a user are not exclusive, but perhaps developmental. That means that if a computer program provides an experience in problem solving that is preliminary to actual reading, then the experience may transfer to the actual literate experience with print in the book technology. Usage of certain problem-solving software that provides this experience can aid an adult in becoming literate. Certainly, the software program described above would offer the opportunity to think and problem solve preliminary to reading, but it also provides a relevance and a necessity for reading a book (i.e. the Almanac) to find information in order to solve the problems posed.

Needs of Adult Learners

The ability to read has a functional purpose for adults, of course, in their jobs, in making decisions on consumer products, in reading safety and health warnings and directions, and in assuring their rights as a citizen. Such functional competencies have been detailed in the 1980 Adult Performance Level Study (APL) out of Texas, and they have their place in teaching literacy to adults.

Beyond just functional purposes, though, are needs of adults to "perpetuate an ongoing communication with life," as Wolf (1977) concludes from his survey of elderly adults. He found that print literacy serves lifelong purposes and fulfills specific needs within the lives of aging persons. Reading satisfies needs for entertainment, curiosity, cultural development and companionship. Not only for the older adults, but for

people of all ages should these be purposes for reading. He found, too, that reading was a way to maintain spiritual and community interests. Many adults needed to read in order to read the Bible. Many wanted to read about events and people in communities where they lived.

The most important purpose for the print literacy ability, though, is that it has a social function among adults. Other studies have indicated that individuals who read do not isolate themselves socially (Steinberg, 1972). Wolf found that the adults exchanged books, discussed them, and built social contacts around sharing ideas they gained from reading. Such adults were more active and involved socially than those who did not read. Jonathan Kozol (1985) eloquently describes this social need of adults in his poetic definition of a literate human being: "one soul, reaching out the loneliness of the human condition to find– through love–another" (p.162). Books serve to fulfill life's needs, not only of adults, but of the young, as well.

Cautions in using the Computer

There are cautions to using the computer to teach literacy to adult learners. These cautions have to be heeded before one may begin to consider the advantages of computer use. One caution resides in the selection of the software itself. If one takes strictly a skills approach to the teaching of reading, then one will select drill and practice programs and tutorials that provide practice and drill in skills already taught. Herein lies the second caution that the computer is not a substitute for good teaching and does not replace a good teacher. An effective teacher prepares plans, selects relevant materials, and proceeds with educationally sound methods. The selected software should facilitate the plans and should be part of a lesson being orchestrated by the teacher who operates from a philosophical approach (Howie, 1988). One approach is the skills approach; another is a problem-solving approach to teaching literacy using such software as simulations, text adventures and problem-solving programs.

Teaching literacy as problem solving requires a student to hypothesize, predict, make guesses, and realize patterns to reading and writing (Howie, in press). These are all mental processes of the mature reader who focuses on understanding and composing ideas in text. The following is a limited, partial list of current programs that are suitable and recommended for adults:

Simulations

Oregon Trail – MECC
Lemonade – MECC
President Elect – Micro Media
Operation:Frog – Scholastic

Text Adventures

Interactive Story Adventures – Telarium
Story Tree – Scholastic
Compupoem – South Coast Writing project

Problem Solving

Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego? – Broderbund
Where in the UA is Carmen Sandiego? – Broderbund
Logo – Apple or Terrapin
The Factory – Sunburst
Rocky's Boots – The Learning Co.
The Game Show – Advanced Ideas

Drill and Practice/Skills

Speed Reader II – Davidson & Associates
Missing Links – Sunburst
Building Comprehension – Hartley

Another caution to heed in using the computer to teach literacy is that transfer of skills and ways of thinking on the computer do not automatically transfer to books. The transfer has to be part of the teacher's plan and eventual goal. The students must be made aware of this plan and goal of their instruction by computer, but not just left to infer these themselves. Good instruction, therefore, will focus on the transference of problem-solving, ways of thinking, and acquisition of prerequisite literacy skills, and integrate the two technologies for the development of print literacy.

A final caution is that the teacher be aware of the effects of the software program on the learner, both affectively, in meeting the learner's needs for self esteem, and cognitively, in developing thinking abilities and literacy skills. Usage of the computer should have a positive learning effect. Not every adult will be willing to use machines, particularly computers, and should never be forced to do so. Most adults, however, will find using a computer a matter of prestige and a boost to their esteem and confidence.

Specific Advantages of the Computer

Because of the tremendous variety of software, the computer offers a wide variation in techniques that appeal to different ways of thinking and learning. Each individual has learning styles that vary but may be accommodated though the variety of techniques the software offers, from drill and practice, to simulations, to word processing. For example, one adult student may learn best through role playing and would benefit from a simulation; another student learns best through language experience and would learn most with a word processor. Robert Taylor (1980) described the variations as Tool, Tutor, Tutee and Toy, the functions of the great array of software programs available. Another advantage is the sensory involvement provided on the computer. Instead of being entirely visual, as is a book, software has the capabilities of being tactile, visual and aural, if one uses a voice synthesizer. People have different learning modalities, and a multi-sensory approach would benefit the majority of learners as to their learning strengths. If one ascribes to the theory of hemispheric dominance, that the right side of the brain is primarily visual and spatial, while the left is predominately verbal and linear, then one may see that the computer would accommodate hemispheric needs in its graphics and text displays.

In contrast to the static book, most software programs are dynamically interactive with the learner. The student has the opportunity to interact with the program, ask it questions, respond to it, get immediate feedback. Another advantage is that the learner may control this interaction, its rate and repetition through self pacing. Thus, the learner may interact continuously with the program until mastery is achieved and feelings of confidence are given a boost. Continuous feedback that is timely may be a tremendous aid to learning. A book or a test in a class cannot give this kind of feedback; too frequently it is delayed for days so that learning from mistakes is made impossible. Because of the interaction possible on the computer, learning from mistakes and subsequent corrections is a tremendous advantage.

With use of a word processor to teach literacy, there are excellent advantages over using paper and pencil or a typewriter. Writers are freed to concentrate on composing knowing that they may easily scroll back through their manuscript to revise, reshape and edit their ideas later. Revision is made so simple with a word processor, in contrast to paper and pen or typewriter. Adult learners will come to appreciate the ephemeral nature of writing that appears on an electronic screen, with the realization that it may be changed and rethought at any time. No longer will language appear unmanipulatable or unchangeable – all one needs to do is cut and paste, push the delete key, or move and replace text to change ideas. Language, thus, to the adult learner is usable, mutable and dynamic.

Probably the best advantage of the computer resides in its social possibilities for learning. Current research in cooperative learning and grouping on the computer (Carrier and Sales, 1987) reveals that learning is significantly enhanced when 2-3 students are grouped to share language and experiences in learning. In such grouping, students use language to generate ideas, become teachers to each other, and enjoy their experiences more. Certainly, grouping could fulfill adult longing and needs for social interactions with other adults. Such grouping counters a sense of isolation and anxiety regarding learning. Furthermore, grouping deals with necessary aspects of adult learning

outlined by Mocker (1975) that differ from children's learning: (1) a student-student communication that recognizes experience and knowledge of each; (2) placing responsibility for learning on the students to foster independence; and (3) having the teacher assume the role of colearner rather than controller of all knowledge. Cooperative learning may be best to meet learning and social needs of adults. The computer, with its screen at a comfortable distance, affords this possibility to a group of people who may share a singular screen's output and read at the same rate. This is in contrast to a book that is smaller and is physically inaccessible to a group at one time so that all may not keep the same page at the same pace.

The computer has many advantages over traditional technologies in learning, thinking and problem solving. It still is highly motivational because of its novelty. If reading and writing are taught as thinking processes akin to problem solving, then skills and experiences acquired on the computer should transfer well, with guidance, to the book. Our goal is literacy development with adult learners and, in a multi-literate society, we need to use technology wisely to perpetuate our values of print literacy. The technologies are compatible and mutually supportive of the overall goals.

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POTENTIAL UNEXPLOITED: PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND ADULT LITERACY

JENNIFER CRAM

There is a Yiddish proverb that goes 'The one who can't dance says the band can't play'. In public libraries, in the area of literacy, many of us are guilty of taking it one step further. Our mindsets tell us that there is no band.

Right now I can see, passing across your foreheads as clearly as those strip neon messages that haunt us all around modern cities, 'What the hell is she talking about?'

Research tells those of us who agree in weak or drunken moments to give papers at conferences that, if we are female, we have only 58 seconds to capture the audience's attention.

Did I succeed?

What I am going to talk about today is theoretical and, I hope, challenging.

I want you to come with me on a journey, a journey through the mindsets that hinder the full exploitation of the resources that we already have in our libraries.

You will notice that I use the word mindset rather than attitude, which was the word I used in the abstract of this paper. The change is deliberate. I used attitude in the abstract because it is a more familiar and perhaps less threatening word. An attitude is something of which most of us are aware, and most people's attitudes are, to a greater or lesser degree, fluid. If we can't completely change an attitude, at least we find the boundaries of that attitude changing on a day to day basis.

A mindset on the other hand is something of which we are generally not aware, simply because it is an ingrained way of looking at things. It is habitual and we may never become aware that we even have a particular mindset until it is pointed out to us that there may be a different way of looking at a particular subject.

I'll give you an example of mindset that is totally unrelated to libraries. When I was at university, living in a college, a group of us were lounging around one evening having a coffee break and listening to the radio. It was one of those nonsensical interview chat shows and they were talking about the reaction of a listener to an interview with the wife of a cabinet minister in which she revealed that when she and her husband bathed together she always had to sit on the plug. I won't go into the details of the listener's reaction because the real point of the story was that we became aware that one of our group was having some sort of a revelation. It came out that all her life she had bathed (alone I might add) sitting on the plug, with her head wedged between the taps. It had simply never occurred to her that she could sit round the other way.

Lawrie Ryan, recently retired State Librarian of Queensland, is wont to say that Libraries support the act of reading. I cannot fault him on that one. But if we leave it at that we severely limit what libraries can do.

We limit what libraries can do because we become guilty of a mindset that we are dealing only with Homo Typographia, Typographic Man, a kind of sophisticated subspecies of Homo Sapiens.

The mark of Homo Sapiens is the word. The word is the main means of communication for our species.

As Laurens van der Post says:

The word 'is not just a rational thing ... it is a very complex, seed thing. With every good word some of it is rational, some of it non-rational, full of its own, independent associations, feelings, meanings and very complex context like a seed that grows when the rain falls on it: it is received and the reception is its rain. Part of it is

obvious: you can see it logically and recognize its use at once. But there is a strong non-logical content in it, so great that the word is more than it expresses. One can listen to words, poetry above all, and one is aware of this immense, almost magical evocation of meaning, of ancient meaning that just comes along with the words as *part of* the package .... Altogether words form a system of communication which is as profound, subtle, proven and experienced as *life* itself. And *in* a sense it is life and gives life. Without it, life as we have known it is inconceivable.' (1)

We tend to think that those who come from cultures that did not develop writing are somehow the product of more primitive societies. They may be more primitive in terms of our technology, though one often finds that the technology they developed was entirely appropriate for their society. However if one looks at the development of the word in that society, a somewhat different picture emerges.

When everything depends on the word, the living word, the spoken word, that word is meant to be for ever.

The sign of a well-brought up person in such cultures is the person who speaks well. A well-spoken person in that context is not a person with the gift of a rhetoric, nor a person with a high-born accent – our definitions of a well-spoken person – but the person who can use the word in a way that moves people, that changes people.

That is what our libraries really are for. They are very dangerous places, as has been acknowledged in those political coups and revolutions that require people to be passive and accepting, and which therefore burn books and restrict access to Libraries.

So are we sure that we are not operating with a mindset that urges us to restrict the dangerous ideas we house by making them available in *a form which is accessible* only to Homo Typographia?

I would ask you to hang on to this thought about the importance of the word, and to measure the ideas I posit in this paper against it.

The human spirit owes a tremendous debt to the word, and it is therefore terribly one-eyed to assume that only in its written form, and only to those who can decipher this written form, is it of any importance.

Such claims are the product of a particular mindset that looks at society on a macro-level.

On a macro-level our society is a literate one. Without being able to read and write English at a reasonably sophisticated level it becomes difficult not only to adequately fulfil one's legal obligations but to operate on a day to day basis. To decipher the directions on a packet of aspirins or read the instructions on a frozen TV dinner one needs to read at the level of those who complete 8 years of formal schooling. To read a lease document one needs a post-secondary reading level.

On a micro-level things are very different.

And, if Public Librarians are giving more than lip-service to the professional pledge to match the user with material at his own level, then we have to consider the micro-culture which formed each individual.

We are seeing many people in their sixties and seventies now who, because of the Depression, had such interrupted schooling that they never learned to read or write. Depending on their reaction to this, their children and grand-children would have grown up in one of two possible micro-cultures. Either those who missed out on learning to read would have felt the lack keenly and while possibly covering up their own inability, would have encouraged reading and education in a way that conveyed quite forcefully within the home that these were to be valued, or in discovering that they could function reasonably adequately without reading the micro-culture of the home could have become one in which reading was either ignored or denigrated.

In dealing with Migrants we tend to classify cultures as literate or non-literate.

Ross Gibbs from Carringbush Library told me a story about that Library's attempts to provide services for a reasonably large Turkish population in the area. They bought books and magazines, advertised the services and waited for custom. It wasn't forthcoming. Eventually someone thought to ask a few questions. The answer was simple, and unexpected. While Turkey, on the macro level is and has been a literate society for a very long time, the particular area from which the groups of migrants had come was not a literate one. Carringbush changed the books for videos, usage took off and everyone was happy.

Public Libraries do serve those who cannot read, but that service tends to be conditional. It is conditional on being intellectually able to decode words on paper but, because of physical infirmity or age, being no longer able to hold a book and turn the pages, or because of visual impairment, being unable to see the words on the page. Or it is conditional on having a genuine desire to learn to read and an innate ability to do so.

Are we serving those who cannot read as exceptions rather than as customers who deserve service at a level appropriate to their needs and abilities?

I believe that our mindset says 'we deal with Typographic Man, he is our prime customer, the stereotype for whom our services and stocks are designed. We make exceptions for those who can no longer read the printed word because of physical infirmity or visual impairment, and we make exceptions for the migrant and the illiterate and for the native peoples of our countries, but only if they are trying to fit into our norm'.

It seems to me that while we do tend to make exceptions for the aged and infirm we tend not, as our mindsets allow us to believe, to serve them out of pure philanthropy, but rather out of an unspoken fear that one day we ourselves might need those services. It is a case of providing services out of sneaking self-interest.

In addition we feel that these people are all right, they are our type of people, they really can read. We feel comfortable with them.

Many librarians joined with Hear-a-book and the Australian Listening Library in the fight to have the copyright waiver extended to those who are physically impaired. The fight to have such a waiver extended to the illiterate is by no means as intense.

We happily provide children's picture books for children who have not yet learned to read, because we are preparing them for reading, for entering into the typographic culture. And we try to ensure that what we buy for them is enjoyable.

But when we are looking to buy material to support English as a Second Language students and Adult Literacy students do we look at the material for its enjoyment factor? Probably not. Enjoyment is what you get from being one of us. When buying to support adult students just how guilty are we of regarding reading as exercise?

Librarians tend to divide people into users and non-users, rather than users and potential users. Into the group of non-users we put those who are never going to learn to read, and as a result that group tends to be very poorly served, even though we may well have a lot of material suitable to their needs already in our collections.

There is another group, almost universally ignored by public libraries, and that is the newly illiterate. We tend to think of the illiteracy – literacy continuum as a one way street. Unfortunately it is possible for those who are literate to become illiterate, and that change is almost inevitably accompanied by tremendous emotional difficulties.

Brain-damage can cause people to lose the ability to decode the printed word, or it can so impede sequential concentration that it becomes impossible to read a sustained narrative. That issue is being more fully addressed by another speaker at

this conference so I won't go into details. However, I must stress that just as the congenitally intellectually handicapped person is often aware of his own intellectual limitations and acutely embarrassed by them, so is the person who can no longer perform to the level which he recalls was normal for him.

And then there is the migrant who is newly illiterate because while he may speak and understand English, he is used to a different sort of writing so for him the Roman alphabet is just marks on paper.

Alan Barclay, in a paper given earlier this year at the conference "Opening doors for closed ears" makes this comment when comparing services for deaf people with the adult literacy experience in libraries:

'Librarians gradually become aware of the literacy problem, so wide-spread but hidden, in the community some years ago. They had to examine their library materials and determine how people with literacy problems could best use them. Music and spoken word cassettes were often in the stock and so too were 'teach yourself English language' tapes. Librarians found something to offer these people immediately. Further research identified books in the children's library with large printing, and a simple range of vocabulary accompanied by illustrations. Suitable texts – often photographic, in the adult section were also identified. Lists were prepared of these books for people who wished to develop reading skills.

'Librarians promoted literacy in their community, and as specially designed materials became available for people with literacy problems, many librarians included them in their stock. They were not restricted to that group and many other people in the community, such as parents or teachers, use the literacy section today as freely as the tutors and literacy students.'

Barclay's summary is a neat one. It demonstrates, however, not only how one can find material to support new usage, but also how by one's attitude one can limit that usage.

'Librarians,' he said, 'Promoted literacy in their community.'

Until it becomes clear to all that libraries do not only support literacy, that it is acceptable to appreciate the word and the idea and thirst after both in other than the written form, and that there will be no stigma attached thereto, libraries will not reach their full potential.

Let us take a brief look at the resources in our libraries that we may not be exploiting to the full in the interest of the literacy student.

First, there is the building itself. We do not have to run classes ourselves though many libraries do that successfully. We can provide access to the building as a classroom or meeting place for tutors and students, and we can provide access at a time when the library is closed to other users to enable new readers to become familiar with the idea of using a library in a non-threatening situation.

But this still limits us to usage by people who have admitted they have problems with literacy and want to do something about it. What about those who have not yet taken that step? If we provide an environment that communicates clearly this is a place in which it is accepted positively that not everyone wants to read, we broaden the potential for the illiterate citizen to feel that it is all right to 'come out of the closet' if he feels that learning to read is something he wants to do.

This means simple things like looking at our advertising, looking at the form of our application card, in short taking an illiterate look at our own services and deciding whether they are appropriate and accepting.

When we look at our book collection have we ensured that we have enjoyable material at all levels? Are we providing adult material for those who have problems with sequential concentration – picture books with short, snappy, directly

connected captions? We often find those are scattered through the collection, we just never thought to group them in that way.

It is not much use making lists of those things which are scattered through the collection which may be appropriate. It is easier for a hale and hearty, fully literate user to find material which has been taken out of the main collection into a special collection, than it is for those who have difficulties to find material which is appropriate to their needs but which is scattered through the general collection.

It is also an easy matter to find non-perjorative terminology for those collections. The term 'Adult picture-book collection' is, for example, pleasantly neutral.

And what about material that is not in print format? Are we still limiting our purchase of recorded readings of books to those restricted to the physically impaired?

A few years ago manufacturers of recorded books in the United States realised that there was a whole reading public out there in the market-place that was too busy to read except when they had time on their hands – on the freeway.

The result was a huge increase in the availability of recorded books. Manufacturers moved away from the abridged recorded book and started to produce full-length recordings of popular material. This has been the publishing success of this decade. Many publishers release the recorded book almost simultaneously with the printed one, and a whole generation of executives is now keeping up with cocktail party discussions of mainstream, high-type novels before they are turned into mini-series.

How many of our staff have to wait for the end of the request list to get hold of those books which our public have expected them to know about and discuss across the counter? How many libraries actually buy commercial recorded books? In not providing recordings which may be borrowed by the hearty able person, we deprive our staff of reading experiences. (A recorded book can make shelf-checking and shelving a more pleasant experience). We also lose the custom of those people who can really influence those who fund libraries. But worse still we deny the pleasure of the story to those whose rates may have contributed to its purchase, simply because they do not fit into our norm.

If we accept the notion that libraries, particularly public libraries, exist primarily to communicate ideas, and we also accept that the word is the vehicle by which Homo Sapiens communicates these ideas, then it becomes perfectly logical to accept that as communication by the written word is only one means of disseminating ideas public libraries are morally obliged to support illiteracy. It is only by actively supporting illiteracy that we can support literacy, and the developing literacy of the user population we are funded to serve.

If we wish to support literacy through public libraries we must make sure that the message those libraries delivers to the community is not 'Come join us in literacy', but rather the more neutral and accepting 'Come join us in the library'.

The problem really isn't as I suggested at the beginning that in libraries we say there is no band. That is, and was meant to be, a provocative absurdity to catch your attention. The problem may be more invidious than that. Are we saying, "If you want to dance, you don't need a band, the musical score is enough?"

(1) Van der Post, Laurens. A Walk With a White Bushman. London, Chatto and Windus, 1986 p.268

INNOVATIVE METHODS EQUAL SUCCESSFUL RESULTS

Sylvia Brozic

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to examine the literacy problem in America and present a teaching method that works. The paper will include a discussion of current literacy research in America, background information on the Laubach Literacy Action and International Organization, a section focusing on the techniques and methods used by one of the largest literacy centres in Southern California and a concluding section that emphasizes the possible outcomes for literacy in the future. The initial section emphasizes the current statistics and definitions of literacy. Some brief background information on Laubach Literacy Action and International Organization is given. This multifaceted organization was founded in 1955 by international literacy pioneer, Dr Frank C. Laubach. It was his belief that each one could teach one. My method of research is developed in the next section. A California literacy center in Costa Mesa under the direction of Margery and Grant Fuller was founded in 1969. After observation of their program, involvement in tutorial teaching, diagnostic testing and being trained in Laubach ESOL and Basic Literacy Methods, I have developed and outlined the center's techniques and methods that have effectively reached hundreds. The conclusion incorporates the center's goals and possible implications for literacy in the future is discussed.

Innovative Methods

The cartoon just shown exemplifies to me that the United States is a Nation at Risk. (Simich, 1988). The crisis is Adult Literacy. Widespread literacy reported by the Media continually alerts us to the on-going problem of adults who cannot read, write, speak or communicate competently enough to meet the demands of modern society. Because there is no consensus on the definition of illiteracy or the supporting statistics, major findings have been assertained from a number of surveys. To assist me in obtaining reliable information, the U.S. Department of Education was contacted to determine the number of people in the United States that are illiterate. The answers depend on how literacy is defined, the population surveyed and the way the population is assessed. First, I will begin with the statistics and then cover a variety of definitions for literacy.

Literacy Studies

In 1975 the Adult Performance Level Study (APL) conducted by the University of Texas estimated that a total of 63 million Americans were not proficient in meeting the educational requirements of everyday life. The survey tested adults age 18 and over on their ability to function in five areas: occupational knowledge, consumer economics, community resources, health and government and law. Applied to today's population, it indicates that one-third of the adult U.S. population is functionally illiterate (U.S. Department of Education, 1987).

According to the 1980 Census data, nearly 52 million adults age 16 years and over are not currently enrolled in high school and have completed less than four years of high school. Every year between 700,000 and 1 million teen-agers in the U.S. drop out of school. Each year over 600,000 legal immigrants and refugees enter the country in need of services to help them perform adequately in society and to obtain the skills and competencies necessary to function effectively in the United States (USDE, 1987).

During the fall of 1982, the English Language Proficiency Study (ELPS), was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education and conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. It gave a conservative estimate of 17 to 21 million adults, or 13% of the population being illiterate. Other

estimates of illiteracy, functional incompetency, and marginal competency range from 0.5 percent to more than 50 percent of the adult population. Accordingly, of the 191 million Americans 14 years and over in 1985, the number who are less than functionally proficient would range from under 1 million to over 100 million (Irwin, 1987).

What are the implications? The illiteracy and incompetency of the Nation's workforce implies losses through low productivity, accidents, employee errors and extra training programs. High rates of illiteracy are reported among welfare recipients and those in criminal institutions. Illiteracy also impinges on our military services and national security. There is no agreement on the costs of illiteracy, but some estimates are over $200 billion annually.

According to former Secretary of Education, T.H. Bell, this hidden problem in the U.S. affects Americans without regard to race, gender or economic status. He points out that each year an estimated two million join the pool of individuals who are functionally illiterate. He further points out that most of these "new illiterates" are legal or illegal immigrants or American citizens who leave school without learning how to read and write (Bell, 1984).

The data is shocking. What is unbelievable is that this type of crisis can exist in the United States when it is one of the most technologically advanced societies in the world. But, the crisis is invisible and most Americans have limited awareness of it.

Literacy Defined

At this point, literacy needs to be defined. In the Ninth Edition of Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary "literate" is defined as the "ability to read and write", and "literacy" is defined as "the state of being literate". But "literacy" means more than that in the United States. Today, literacy is defined in relation to the demand of society in which a particular individual must function. *Literacy: Profiles of America's Young Adults*, the National Assessment of Educational (NAEP) study, used the following definition of literacy:

Using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential (U.S.D.E., 1987).

Another report from the U.S. Department of Education, the Education and Public Welfare Division (Irwin, 1987), stated that the scope of adult literacy can range from the simple ability to read and write one's own name to the collection of complex skills needed for individuals to function effectively in our modern-day technological society. The report defines two general types of literacy as (a) conventional, involving simple reading and writing skills, and (b) functional, where a more complex set of skills and proficiencies is used as the standard.

Conventional Literacy

The U.S. Census Bureau periodically collects literacy data. In a 1979 survey of ancestry and language, all persons 14 years and over who had less than a sixth grade education were counted as illiterate if they reported they were (a) unable to read and write English at all, or (b) unable to read and write a language other than English which they also spoke at home. This definition of illiteracy is considered the "conventional" or "traditional" definition.

Functional Illiteracy

According to this report, the term "functional illiteracy" began to be used during the 1940s and 1950s to describe persons who were incapable of understanding written instructions necessary to accomplish specific tasks or functions. In particular, the U.S. Army used tests to distinguish World War II trainees who needed additional education training before they could comprehend written military instructions. The conventional definition of literacy proved insufficient for making these distinctions.

Definitions of functional literacy depend on

the specific tasks, skills, or objectives thought necessary for the comprehension of a literate person. As various experts defined clusters of "needed" skills, definitions proliferated. The literacy definition became more complex as the technological and information needs of the society increased.

Wanting something even more specific, I interviewed Louise A. Simon, Public Relations/Development, of California Literacy, Inc. She explained that one of the most often-asked questions is the definition of "literacy" or "illiteracy". It was a difficult question, because the definition of terms has changed over the years, but one increasingly necessary to answer if literacy providers are to communicate needs.

She explained that when we talk about "literacy" now, it is not in the clear-cut ABC recognition or ability to sign one's name that it used to be. She explained that Paul Kiley, head of community organization/ communication for the California State Library Literacy program has pointed up some not-so-simple lines of demarcation for identifying those in need of literacy services in today's terms. She has taken his model and quantified it in percentages of those in need. The following chart shows those breakdowns (Simon, 1988):

10% – 15%	30% – 40%	45% – 60%
"Old Fashioned" definition	"scanners"	"high functional illiterate"

This first 10%-15% is the "old fashioned illiterate". This is the person for whom the printed word might as well be a foreign language written in an unrecognizable alphabet. This person cannot decode letters or the simplest words.

The next 30% to 40% consists of the "scanners". This person may know the alphabet and some words from memory or recognition, but cannot break language down into meaning.

The last and largest group, say 45% to 60%, is the most difficult to pin down, the "functionally illiterate" at the highest level, one who may be reading word-for-word, usually a sight reader, able to make out words and whole sentences, but unable to relate what he or she is reading. This person lacks the ability to interpret materials, such as a job application, instructions for operating unfamiliar machinery, or a complicated memo. As you can see, Literacy has many definitions, but no matter what definition one uses or what test one takes--the inability to function effectively in society is a major problem.

Literacy Problems

My awareness of the illiteracy problem began when I was teaching in a Special Education class in high school some years ago. It was alarming to find that most students assigned to me were only reading between a second and fourth grade level. Although various learning disabilities were primary causes of low achievement levels, this experience influenced my decision to further explore the literacy problem. Beginning with these students, I taught survival skills such as reading labels on bottles, learning directions for a bus route and ordering from a menu. Many of these students - potential drop-outs, have to report weekly to a probation officer, so I felt these reading skills were most practical for them.

My next step was to return to elementary school and become a Resource Specialist. This type of position enabled me to reach a wide range of students from kindergarden to sixth grade. It was my hope that by setting a strong foundation, childhood illiteracy would be somewhat less and as adults these children would be more literate.

The 1986 ABC News Closeup, *At a Loss for Words: Illiterate in America*, actively motivated me to become more actively involved in the literacy movement. The report emphasized that the United States was at risk in a number of areas due to the high percentage of people being functionally illiterate. These areas were the American economy, our dominant

position in the world community, the lack of a productive workforce, our educational crisis in the public schools and most of all our National Security. This was of great concern to me to realize that our democratic ideals were in jeopardy.

This further meant that those Americans who are functionally illiterate are unable to fully share in the democratic process and therefore unable to participate in decision making. They are not free. Freedom empowers you to have choices. Our society is based on a free democracy for everyone. As Thomas Jefferson said, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, it expects what never was and never will be".

Background Information – Laubach

Presently, I am associated with the Costa Mesa Literacy Center. The center is affiliated with the Central Orange County Literacy Council. There are approximately 40 councils in California operating over 225 centers. They in turn are associated with California Literacy, Inc. which is the state office affiliate of Laubach Literacy Action, the largest private literacy organization in the U.S.

California Literacy, Inc. was founded in Alhambra, California in 1956. Among its many responsibilities is the coordination of and assistance to existing literacy councils in the state as well as the establishment of new programs.

Laubach Literacy Action is the U.S. program division of Laubach Literacy International. It has over 600 community-based programs in 46 states.

In 1955 Laubach Literacy International (LLI) was founded by Dr Frank C. Laubach. Dr Laubach spent 40 years as a literacy consultant to governments, church missions and private organizations. Working in 103 countries and 314 languages, he is credited with the basic education of millions of adults. It was as a missionary in the Philippines in the 1930s that Dr Laubach discovered the value of key words to aid students in identifying sounds, and that he discovered the untapped potential of volunteer teachers. In the Lanao province the motto, "Each One Teach One", was first heard and continues today. Laubach Literacy Action continues his work today through a worldwide network of trained volunteers who enable illiterate adults to acquire the literacy skills they need to solve their daily problems.

Costa Mesa Literacy Center

The Costa Mesa Literacy Center of which I am associated was founded in 1969 under the direction of Margery and Grant Fuller. For nineteen (19) years with regularity and consistency they have been a stabilizing force in the community. Their very successfully run center is one of the largest in California. A philosophy that they live by is "Anyone with any problem can get the help they need". It is with this attitude that they attract a wide population of adults.

Initial referrals are from Project Plus, California Literacy, Inc., Santa Ana Social Services, Orange County Social Services and satisifed students who have not only gained in academics but in self worth. The long standing status of the volunteer teaching staff has also been influential in the center's success.

The first step taken with all students is to make a determination as to placement. A variety of diagnostic tests are given.

For non-English speakers an informal oral language assessment consisting of identity skills, alphabet and number recognition and other readiness skills is given. For the functionally illiterate student, the Nelson Reading test is given. This test determines vocabulary and comprehension levels by grade.

Another diagnostic tool is the Laubach Way to Reading Diagnostic Inventory. Its purpose is to place students in the appropriate skill book in the LWR series and to give the teacher a fairly detailed record of the student's present reading skills. The Pre-Screening test is used

initially to make a placement determination. Later the Student Reading Profiles are used as post-tests after completion of each skill book.

Teaching in the Laubach Method consists of two areas. One is ESOL or English or Speakers of Other Languages and the other is Basic Literacy.

ESOL is taught to the adults having no English skills. Margery Fuller explained that four basic types of individuals are reached with ESOL at their center:

1. Non-English males who can't get jobs

2. Non-English mothers who need help with their children in school, taking them to the doctors, and in community involvement

3. Higher education persons from other countries who due to a lack of English skills, can only get entry level jobs

4. Those individuals who are unemployable due to thick accents.

In the ESOL program it is initially desirable for a group of two to six students to work together with one tutor. This enables the students to offer encouragement to each other and also the students gain an awareness that others are experiencing the same problems they face. This in turn develops a social and educational experience.

Definite teaching guides are used in ESOL teaching. Initially, gestures are used with very beginning students. The gestures are definite, clear, and gentle. These gestures are important because the students do not understand such common words as listen, say and repeat.

As outlined in the California Literacy, Inc. brochure, ESOL involves student participation in the following ways:

- Conversation and participation
- Uses non-verbal communication and visual aids
- Phonics with a sound-symbol relationship
- Learning a controlled vocabulary

Potential tutors need to only have English speaking skills; knowledge of a foreign language is not necessary (CLI, 1988).

A variety of charts are used with objects to reinforce the phonics with sound-symbol relationships.

Procedures for teaching vocabulary and sentence patterns are always the same.

Teaching steps follow a definite formula which reinforce a concept. It is this repetition type of teaching that helps reinforce the information.

Another aspect of ESOL is "Survival English". This is the English needed for a student's immediate personal needs. It is up to the tutor to informally access the student to determine those needs. Examples of "Survival English" would be using the telephone, paying for gasoline, learning traffic rules, using a menu in a restaurant and learning the coin and dollar values.

As the student progresses and becomes more adept in the use of oral language, he advances into the skillbooks for the Laubach Way to English or directly into the Laubach Way to Reading series. When this occurs the tutor returns to the one-to-one concept. The relationship between the student often becomes one of tutor/friend. A trust develops and problems of the student are discussed and more learning takes place because the tutor relates to the student in a very personal way.

As one study pointed out, basic literacy students are most comfortable in a one-to-one tutoring situation, where the pace is their own. Only the tutor is then aware of their errors and none of the overt or covert competition occurs (Eberle & Robinson, 1980).

Students who are functionally illiterate are taught basic literacy skills. These include a structure of 260 reading skills presented in

a logical, sequential order with detailed lesson plans emphasizing the transfer of newly-learned skills the students encounter in everyday life.

The Laubach Way to Reading series and the Laubach Way to English series are used. As a transition text the Laubach Way to English has lessons that stress dialogue, vocabulary, grammer, pronunciation and oral review. The Laubach Way to Reading series is based on the successful teaching methods developed by Dr Frank C. Laubach in his forty years as a literacy educator. Sound/symbol relationships are taught through carefully controlled key words and pictorial memory cues.

As stated earlier it is essential to encourage the transfer of these newly learned skills to everyday life. The self-help needs of each individual is considered. The following chart shows examples of how self-help needs are addressed.

A number of years ago the center was commissioned by Hoag Memorial Hospital in Newport Beach to teach their Housekeeping staff some basic English vocabulary that was job related. In California we have a large Hispanic population. Many are legal aliens and have limited English skills. So, the center serves the community and assists in industry and business.

The extensive training given to the tutors consists of 18 hours of ESOL and 12 hours of Basic Literacy. The attitude of the tutor is a vital link in the learning. Self esteem and self confidence skills are additional student gains. The teachers are committed to encouraging the students and they offer both respect and admiration when needed.

Last year the center received a grant from the City of Costa Mesa. They are using part of the money to prepare a video for public access television (Channel 61). This will hopefully encourage more individuals to seek out the services of this center and to embark upon a course of study. It is volunteer based instruction and is cost free to the students.

In 1989, the Fullers are looking for a 25 percent student/teacher increase. The overall average of the center is 50 student/teacher ratio per week.

Future Implications

What are the possible outcomes for adult literacy in the future? A new report predicts that four key trends will shape the last years of the twentieth century (U.S.D.E., 1987):

- The economy will grow at a relatively healthy pace.
- U.S. manufacturing will be a much smaller share of the economy and service industries will create all of the new jobs and most of the new wealth.
- The workforce will grow slowly, becoming older, more female, and more disadvantaged.
- The new jobs in service industries will demand much higher skill levels than the jobs of today.

These key trends carry implications for literacy skills in several ways. Very few new jobs will be created for those who cannot read, follow directions, and use mathematics. Demographic trends, coupled with higher skill requirements of the economy, will lead to both higher and lower unemployment, more joblessness among the least-skilled and less among the most educationally advantaged. The report points out that "Between now and the year 2000, for the first time in history, a majority of all new jobs will require postsecondary education".

One policy challenge they suggest is to improve workers' education and skills. It is important to do something now. It concludes that if nothing unusual is done to focus national attention and action on this and other challenges that the problem will still be unresolved at the beginning of the next century.

SURVIVAL SKILLS VOCABULARY

In exploring the possible outcomes for adult literacy in the future, I was quite surprised to learn of all the existing and ongoing efforts taking place nationwide.

In 1983 the Adult Literacy Initiative (LI) of the U.S. Department of Education was established by the President of the U.S. to provide focus and help for literacy programming. The operations of the initiative include (Irwin, 1987):

1. Cooperation with the Coalition for Literacy and the Advertising Council in sponsoring a National Awareness Campaign on adult literacy including an 800 number Literacy Hotline. Laubach Literacy International is part of the Coalition mobilizing more than 50,000 volunteers to teach basic skills to 60,000 students through 500 community affiliate programs.

2. Redirecting part of the College Work-Study program to employ students in literacy programs.

3. Encouraging student and adult volunteers as literacy tutors.

4. Working with the Federal Employee Literacy Training (FELT) program, whereby all Federal agencies encourag employees to volunteer as literacy tutors.

5. Sponsoring national meetings and conferences.

6. Developing private/public sector partnerships, including support for the Business Council for Effective Literacy.

Public effort by states to address literacy problems is organized under the Federal AEA program. Literacy programs are operated by a multitude of private groups including churches, businesses, labor unions, civic and ethnic groups among others.

The two national groups that provide voluntary tutors and instructional materials for private literacy programs are Laubach Literacy Action and Literacy Volunteers of

America.

The ABC and the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) are jointly involved in Project Literacy U.S. a national television project on adult literacy. The purpose of this major media outreach is to mobilize literacy training opportunities and motivate those who need basic skills help (USDE, 1986).

These are only some of the efforts that are ongoing at this time in the U.S. As our former Secretary of Education, T.H. Bell, said, "A high level of literacy among all our citizens is essential to the continued vitality of society" (Bell, 1984). The efforts are paying off. Since the advent of Project Literacy, U.S. (PLUS) campaign, 366 local Task Forces have been established. A recent ABC poll reports that 71 percent of the public is aware of the illiteracy problem, up from 40 percent before PLUS programming began (USDE, 1988).

President Regan has said, "We're a people who believe that each generation will stand upon the shoulders of the one before it, the accomplishments of each ever greater than before" (Bell, 1984).

The California Literacy, Inc. organization states on their fact sheet (1988), "Lacking literacy, the population lacks the means to understand any other cause. It is no longer some amorphous problem that is THEIRS--the problem is OURS".

With that final thought in mind, may I end with "When it is dark all around, maybe it is YOU who is supposed to TURN on the LIGHT".

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Training Tutors - Structured Strategies That Work

by Vince Dundas and George Strong

Vince Dundas is a Guidance Consultant with the Catholic Education Office, Brisbane. His familiarity and expertise in conducting parent programs has emerged from a keen interest in the area and his experience having conducted successful parent intervention programs.

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AIM OF THE PROGRAM

The "Readers Writers and Parents - Learning Together" Program has been developed to assist pupils' literacy development through tutor intervention.

This is achieved by -

* providing the tutors with information and knowledge about literacy development and how they may help;
* developing competence in the tutors' ability to assist their pupils by teaching them the necessary skills;
* developing confidence in the tutors' use of the strategies taught, through regular practice and constructive feedback.

FORMAT

The core of the program is the manual - *"Readers Writers and Parents - Learning Together".*

The program focuses primarily on the role of parents as tutors in support of their children's literacy. Its flexibility, however, also allows the facilitator to incorporate -

* Peer-tutor programs
* Teacher Aide programs
* Volunteer Aide programs.

The manual presents a detailed treatment of skill training within each of ten (10) learning sessions. Its practical approach is emphasised by the inclusion of over fifty (50) overhead transparencies which support the objectives of each session and permit ease of delivery and logical sequence for the session.

Integral to the program is the Parent Handbook which complements each session and provides a ready reference for procedures and activities performed in the session.

SESSIONS

In this program there are three essential reading strategies, and strategies to help with writing, spelling and study skills/projects. These are outlined in the sessions below.

1. *Making a Start* - organising time; how to introduce a book; how to use praise; 100 word test; contract.

2. *Helping with Reading* - understanding the reading process; how to prompt.

3. *Learning to Read* - reliving the experience; the transformation strategy.

4. *Reading Together* - the Neurological Impress Method; getting meaning from print.

5. *Running Records* - their purpose; how to use them; keeping track of progress.

6. *Writing* - developmental stages; responding to writing.

7. *Writing* - dictated stories; a process writing approach.

8. *Spelling* - developmental stages; spelling games; look-say-cover-write-check.

9. *Projects* - preparation; identifying information; word web; project plan.

10. *Looking at Books* - the benefits; types of books; supportive texts.

Essential Strategy 1 - Prompting During Reading

Reading is about meaning.

See Appendix 1 - "The Search for Meaning" and Appendix 2 - "Prompting During Reading".

Essential Strategy 2 - Transformations

Transformations is a procedure which can involve a reader in:

(i) word recognition within a context rather than as an isolated activity;

(ii) comparisons of subtle changes of meaning as a sentence is extended and/or transformed;

(iii) a variety of written language structures.

Transformations help students:

- to see how words follow regular patterns;
- understand how the order of the words can be changed and keep the meaning;
- to predict words in common sentence structures;
- understand words have meaning;
- to use reading strategies such as reading-on, re-reading;
- to learn punctuation, grammar and more complex sentence structure;
- gain confidence in reading and the writing process.

Students who will benefit from Transformations:

- Non-readers and writers. This procedure will help them get started by building their confidence and having them look at the text for meaning. *Sample sentence: "I went to the shop and bought lollies."*
- Students who can read but experience difficulties in applying the usual reading strategies. These students benefit from thinking about meaning, prediction and becoming accustomed to the syntactic patterning. *Sample sentence: "When I was tackled, I lost my boot."*
- Students who appear to be reading quite well but who may need assistance in writing structures such as punctuation, grammar and sentence extensions. *Sample sentence: "Because I forgot to tell Mum I wouldn't be home for dinner, she cooked me a roast meal with baked potatoes and pumpkin."*

Essential Strategy 3 - Reading Together

The Reading Together Procedure has the following advantages:

- it develops fluency;
- it assists students who may omit or insert words as they read;
- it assists development of punctuation and expression through modelling (i.e. the student must stop at the punctuation mark if the person reading with him does so);
- it exposes students to unknown words;
- it builds confidence.

Procedure:

- Select a story at the reader's instructional level (or independent level for reluctant readers). The reading material should be slightly easier if anything. NEVER frustrational level.

- Discuss the story.

- The student follows with his eyes; a finger or clear or coloured plastic can be used as a marker. DO NOT USE A RULER. IT DOES NOT ALLOW THE READER TO SCAN THE NEXT LINE.

There are three (3) stages to the procedure.

1. The parent reads alone and student follows.

2. Both read together.

3. The student reads alone.

The parent should ensure they are reading at a pace similar to the student's reading ability.

Essential Strategy 4 - Responding to Writing

See Appendix 3 - "The Responsive Audience, and Appendix 4.

Essential Strategy 5 - Projects

This strategy identifies organisational procedures such as brainstorming, word web and three column plan to develop main headings, sub-headings and supporting detail (maps, illustrations, etc.) of a project, and the resources in which they are to be found.

The project plan is used to pull these elements together and to provide a clearly visible and logically sequenced structure to the project.

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THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

1. Meaning is the purpose of reading, not 'sounding out'.
2. Everyone makes errors in reading.
3. Everyone learns differently because everyone has different memory networks.
4. How your child learns literacy will depend upon how many (and what kind of) memory bottlenecks there are.
5. Some errors improve the author's writing.
6. Many errors have no effect upon meaning.
7. The more we concentrate upon avoiding errors, the more errors we make.
8. The more we concentrate upon avoiding errors, the less we will understand.
9. Many people do not perform well in oral reading, although they can read well silently.
10. Speed of reading is generally related to how much we already know about the content.
11. Efficient readers predict a lot.
12. Efficient readers take risks with words they don't know.

Kemp, Max; Rebuilding Literacy, Schools and Community Centre, Canberra College of Advanced Education, 1985.

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PROMPTING DURING READING

THE CHILD IS STUCK ON A WORD

Wait (5 seconds).

↓

Tell the child the meaning of the word (if possible).

↓

Ask the child to re-read the sentence.

↓

Ask the child to re-read the sentence, put in blank and read on.

↓

Look at the beginning of the unknown word. Re-read the sentence putting in the beginning sound and read on.

↓

Tell the child the word.

THE MISTAKE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE

Wait (5 seconds).

↓

Ask the question — "Does that make sense?" or "Can you/we say that?"

↓

Ask the child to "Look closely at this word. It means _____."

↓

Ask the child to re-read the sentence, put in blank and read on.

↓

Look at the beginning of the unknown word. Re-read the sentence putting in the beginning sound and read on.

↓

Tell the child the word.

THE MISTAKE MAKES SENSE

Wait (5 seconds).

↓

When the child finishes the sentence, ask him/her to "Look closely at this word".

↓

Look at the beginning of the word.

↓

Tell the child the word.

- If you forget the sequence or become flustered, go straight to the last prompt and re-read the sentence.
- Ignore minor mistakes. e.g. 'a' for 'the' or 'big' for 'large'.
- If the child will not attempt a word, wait and then use prompts in Column 1.
- Always ask the child to re-read the sentence and praise.

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THE RESPONSIVE AUDIENCE

PROCEDURE

The child writes a sentence or story about some interesting event that has happened to him/her.

The parent reads the child's writing.

The parent, in turn, writes a brief personal response to the child (approximately 4 — 5 lines).

Focus only on the content of the story but include corrections of one or two words incorrectly spelt by the child.

DON'T — comment on the spelling or grammar orally or in writing.

— make any evaluative comment on the accuracy of the mechanical aspects.

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Jon fell off the Bed on Sunday

Did Jon hurt himself when he fell off the bed on Sunday? That's not a very nice way to spend the weekend.

I like
yes Jon harhis
yes Jon hurt his self.

How did he hurt himself?

hea had a stke in his mah

He had a stick in his mouth? That sounds awful. Did he cry a lot? What did Mummy do?

he
Dad toke he tothe Dod

What did the Doctor do to him?

The Doctor gut he three tJallis
The Doctor gavf hem three Jall Bis

I like jelly beans. The doctor gave my little boy some jelly beans. Do you like jelly beans.

yes i like jelly beans. The Doctor gavf me a red jelly beans

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WHAT CAN I READ?

AILEEN TRELOAR

The work presented in this paper is still in progress. The reading group consisted of two men and two women, all in their twenties who met together for two hours a week for six weeks; this was in addition to their normal sessions with their volunteer tutors. We met in my home because I wanted the atmosphere to be relaxed, more like a book discussion group than a class, though they always referred to it as a class. They had all volunteered to take part in an experiment to see if, given sufficient support, books from the general library collection could be made accessible.

Even though the numbers and examples are, at present, limited, the preliminary findings are consistent with the experience of adult new readers I have worked with over the past decade. I shall discuss why it matters what we give students to read, how to help them to be able to read and how to help them to want to read.

"Of course, we have to accept that none of these students will ever read books", a literacy worker said to me the other day. I found myself wondering how many others she spoke for. If this is one's working assumption, then "resources" will be the vehicle for developing reading skills – whatever they might be. If, on the other hand, we believe that reading books is important and that adult new readers will become book readers, if we passionately desire that they should, then all our efforts will be directed to that end.

Smith says the task of children is "to create a theory of the world" but why limit that to children? Surely this is the task of life, and language, in all its forms, aids us in this task. If "The limits of my language are the limits of my world" as Wittgenstein suggests (Meek 1977, p.17) then how better to explore the worlds within and the worlds without than by reading; all sorts of reading.

Myth and heroic legend deal with the fundamental questions: How was the world made? How will it end? How did things get the way they are? What of good and evil? Jung says the substance of myth comes from the unconscious of the tribe, is accepted by the tribe and taken into the life of the tribe; new myth can be added but it must follow this same path.

Before the invention of the printing press, myth existed in oral tradition and was accessible to all. There are a few lingering remnants in western society. Lessons are still read aloud in church, ballads are still danced in the Faeroes – but in the main the advent of near universal literacy has severed people from their mythic heritage. This is a live issue for countries implementing mass literacy campaigns. Will literacy be built on the mythic and cultural heritage of its people or will literacy prove to be destructive?

Linked with myth and legend is fantasy, which includes folk and fairy tales as well as science fiction. Fantasy lives in the interface between inner and outer realities; it fulfils the need to experience other ways of knowing, to make sense of the chaos within.

Tolkien, author of the cult fairy story **Lord of the Rings**, says, "If a fairy story as a kind is worth reading at all it is worthy to be written for and read by adults. They will, of course, put more in and get more out than children can." (1964, p.89). It is interesting to note that **Lord of the Rings** swept the English speaking Western world at a time when traditional Christian symbols were losing their place. An awful example of the need for symbols in the management of good and evil is Nazi Germany where the Jews became an embodiment of all the evil within, whose existence could not be acknowledged and which therefore was beyond means of control.

Science fiction is a modern, socially acceptable (especially for males) form of

fantasy. On the train I watch young men who are finding life difficult with the new breed of assertive young women, reading tales of male dominance and power. The new breed of young women are also often reading fantasies of male dominance and power – from the Mills and Boon fable factory.

Picture story books are thought of as particularly for children but there are several with distinctly adult content. Our group read two, **Sir Gawain and the Loathly Lady** and **The Highwayman** which were of major significance in the development of their understanding of and desire for reading. I believe the very high quality of the visual art in these two books was a significant factor in their power to move.

Keifer, in a discussion of the place of picture books in a reading program writes: "M's comment (on **Hiroshima No Pika**) indicates an immediate emotional and intellectual response to the feelings and ideas expressed in this powerful book. In addition, she was aware that the pictures can call up responses in a very different way than words can and that the artist is able to make deliberate choices in the way meaning is conveyed." (1988, p.260).

Fiction in its various forms is the final group of stories to be discussed. We are all seriously limited by being able to live only one life; fiction enables us, vicariously, to live other lives, to explore other options, to get some perspective on our own life. "Detached and distanced evaluation is sometimes sharper for avoiding the blurrings and bufferings that participant action brings, and the spectator often sees the event in a broader context than the participant can tolerate." (Meek, 1977, p.61).

One of the joys of reading fiction is the experience of being inside a story, of playing the "what if" game. What if I were Bess, or the Loathly Lady, the Highwayman or Sir Gawain? If I were, how would I feel? How would I feel if I were Ned? To read like this is to read creatively. "Now the gift of creative reading, like all natural gifts, must be nourished or it will atrophy. And you nourish it, in much the same way you nourish the gift of writing – you read, think, talk, look, listen, hate, fear, love, weep – and bring all of your life like a sieve to what you read. That which is not worthy of your gift will quickly pass through, but the gold remains." (Paterson, 1981, p.26).

When meeting with the group my own first breakthrough came when I realized we were at cross purposes in our understanding of what reading actually is. I acted on the assumption that one reads for meaning. They worked on the principle, painfully learnt at school, that reading is saying every word perfectly, pausing for commas, stopping at full stops while never losing the place or pointing with a finger. Any helpful comments I made about reading the rest of the sentence to see if it helped with the difficult word or omitting it entirely if they could get by without it were met with blank incomprehension. Texts I had chosen on the basis of their story became a jumble of words, commas and full stops.

My first approach was to discuss the background to the text. **The Coming of Arthur**, to read it to them once then to read it again while they followed. James asked Andy, "When you listen to this are you actually reading it or just following the words? Because I can do that, just follow it. I can miss a few lines then catch up. That's what I used to do at school, right? Now .... not to do this .... I had .... when the teacher would say to me 'Read a few paragraphs', and all of a sudden .... ooh .... and you feel all hot and nervous and you couldn't read the lines .... and then .... mainly because I couldn't do it in the first place." Is it any wonder that he is confused? Until new readers understand what reading is about it would seem that simply providing tapes to go with texts is of limited value.

The break through for the new readers came with **Sir Garwain and the Loathly Lady** and **The Highwayman** – two most beautifully illustrated books with undeniably adult content. The illustrations are so good that in each case it is possible to work out the story from the pictures

alone and not just to work out the story but to experience it. Shona said, "I'd like to go and ask them what they are talking about .... like to go into the picture and ask them." I had what Judith Newman calls a "critical incident" when I caught my internal dialogue, "Why don't they think about the text?" The answer being, I think, that their energies are totally absorbed in the surface of the text with no attention left over for anything else, rather like the white knuckled concentration of a wobbly new cyclist. Jan later said, "I've learnt this week .... now I can miss that one." The illustrations helped this process by establishing the story in the first place and then by carrying it. This gave other ways of thinking about the text and in that way introduced the parallel processing which is so much part of reading. When the group understood this and were using all the information at their disposal then they were able to use the tapes as back up.

Another major element which emerged is the great gulf between what one ought to do and what one wants to do. "Want" wins all the time over the outlay of energy required to discipline oneself to "ought". It became very clear from their discussions that they found it very difficult to make themselves read during the week. James said, "I didn't want to give up. I wanted to fight it.", and Shona, who one week had not been feeling well reported, "... and that made it even harder still." The effort required was clearly immense and difficult to sustain. Moreover the reading itself gave little reward; the whole experience was energy draining. However, when reading became pleasurable and created energy then it was something to be welcomed, it became something they wanted to do.

When we were reading the picture books I became aware of a sudden change in the energy level. They did too and commented, "The atmosphere was different tonight." It was; it was charged and alive with excitement. The pictures had made a powerful emotional appeal through which they experienced being inside the story. All their previous attempts to read had been through cold intellect; – in concentrating on the graphophonic cue they were dealing with the most cold, most intellectual aspect of the reading process. Art, by tapping into their emotions in quite a different way from language was able to set free the story and set them free to enjoy it. It was as if the prince had broken through the thicket and released the princess from her spell, bringing life and joy. Once they had that experience with the picture books there was no problem in moving on to other texts because they knew what reading was. When Jan needed her whole body to discuss Tim Winton's story, **Forest Winter**, I knew she was a reader.

Summary:

1. It is important for new readers to have access to the best literature available.

2. Tapes are of limited value unless the readers understand they are reading for meaning.

3. Picture books appeal to the emotions and facilitate active imagination which makes possible the experience of being inside a story. This in turn releases energy and brings an understanding of reading for meaning.

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THE USE OF AN INFORMAL PRELIMINARY INTERVIEW IN DEVELOPING INDIVIDUAL LITERACY PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

CELIA WATSON

ABSTRACT

This paper is a short account of a teacher's use of a preliminary interview to collect information from twenty-three disabled adults about (a) their motivation to engage in literacy-related activities and (b) their wider interests. The interviews took place in the context of an independent rehabilitation centre providing services for 130 disabled adults.

The writer's experience indicates that an individual interview is useful for establishing a working relationship between a teacher and an adult student. The procedures for conducting the interviews and recording and using the information so collected are discussed. Each interview suggested starting points for developing a literacy program with an individual student.

The results of the interviews considered as a whole,provide useful insights for the provision of services. Motivation and interests are compared and tabulated in terms of the four categories of disability (psychiatric, intellectual, brain injury and multiple) used to describe the people interviewed.

INTRODUCTION

Assisting disabled adults with literacy skills can be fraught with difficulty for the teacher working in a self-help centre. Some of the potential students may have no desire to engage in this activity. Others may have lost some of their powers of concentration, memory or language processing through trauma or disease affecting the brain. Another group may have physical difficulties, such as disabilities of speech, hearing, sight or manual dexterity. Still others may have had minimal educational opportunity, or have an Intellectual Disability. A final group may have psychiatric problems which make relationships difficult for them.

The teacher needs to meet with such adults on terms of equality. Written files can provide background information to give insight into a person's difficulties, but the one to one meeting of teacher and student is an important component in building the motivation of the adult disabled student, and providing the teacher with a realistic starting point for program planning. The informal preliminary interview is a preferred means of beginning development of an individual program, because it emphasises this equal relationship.

SWARA – SUNSHINE WELFARE AND REMEDIAL ASSOCIATION – is a rehabilitation program which was set up with the specific goal of providing worthwhile and meaningful work for people with disabilities which would enable them to lead as normal and happy lives as possible.

The emphasis is always on individual needs and every effort is made to minimise problems and maximise potential. SWARA has always recognised that difficulties with literacy skills are a very important aspect of the total rehabilitation scheme and has attempted to look at the clients' problems in a thoughtful and understanding way. There were two teachers at SWARA at the time in question (January – June 1987), one doing interviews, the other providing teaching time twice a week.

The clients attending SWARA, in most cases, attend the Centre of their own accord. They are not compelled to engage in activities against their wills. This being the case, any program intended to enhance the literacy of individual clients must engage the interest of the participants and attempt to build their motivation.

PRELIMINARY READING INTERVIEW

(a) A background Attitude and interest inventories are mentioned (Otto and Smith, 1980, pp. 107-109) among strategies for diagnosis in reading. Otto and Smith mention 5 sources for tests available for diagnosis in this area. (See Appendix I) However, as Otto and Smith observe (p.109):

Although quite a few interest inventories have been published, locally developed inventories are best; questions can be geared to the students who will be responding.

The use of pencil and paper inventories is not possible for many disabled adults. The interview is a practical alternative.

(b) Purpose The purpose of interviewing clients before involving them in the reading program was two-fold: firstly to assess the motivation of the client to engage in a reading program, and secondly to establish the interests of each client. Even people who are not motivated to read may benefit from reading-related activities connected with their personal interests. Some may enjoy listening to an oral reading of a text of interest to them. Others may find satisfaction in compiling a scrapbook or photograph album and composing captions with assistance, using a language experience approach to reading. It is by exploring the interests of clients and structuring reading activities around these interests, that the teacher can provide the client with the opportunity to develop continuing motivation for reading. When this happens, the client begins to take personal responsibility for continuing to learn.

(c) Procedure

(I) Client selection.
Some clients volunteered to talk to the teacher. Others were referred, either by the Director (who was especially interested in involving the brain-injured clients in programs), or by other SWARA Staff.

(II) Interview Technique.
The method of interview was very informal. The teacher talked to each client separately in a small room. Each client was asked for name and date of birth at the beginning of the interview, firstly to enable the teacher to match the interview results with the appropriate client file, and secondly to give the teacher a guide as to how well the disabled person could comprehend and respond to oral questions.

Clients were then encouraged to talk about themselves, particularly (a) whether they found reading easy or difficult, and (b) what activities or topics were of interest to them. If a client was having difficulty relaxing in the interview situation, the teacher would ask him or her to talk about daily tasks at SWARA.

(III) Record Keeping.
The information collected from the interview was summarised on a single sheet of paper under the following headings: Date, Interviewers Name, Clients name and date of birth, Motivation, Interests, Comments. (A sample record sheet appears in Table I). The comments often included a suggestion from the teacher for an initial activity to try with the client. The completed form was filed in the clients file, while the names of all clients interviewed were recorded on a central list.

TABLE 1: RECORD OF PRELIMINARY READING INTERVIEW

Date: 9.2.1987.

Interviewer: C. Watson.

Client: R.

Date of birth: 24/3/1949

Motivation: R. said he had difficulties with reading. He said he had done a course involving the use of tape recordings.

Interests: R. said he enjoys watching T.V. and particularly mentioned the news, weather and sport. He listens to tapes of music and stories.

Comments: R. might enjoy using the "book and tape" sets available in the supermarkets ("Star Wars" etc.) or simpler titles, if necessary. As an alternative, he could be included in a group using the newspaper as the basis for discussion of news, weather and sport.

(d) Use of Information

(i) The information collected from each individual (with the interviewing teacher's comments and suggestions) was made available through the individual client's file to the teacher offering individual programs twice a week. The resources and programs offered by this teacher are listed in Appendix II.

(ii) The concept of interviewing the clients of SWARA was seen as worthwhile to gain some feedback as to the clients' perception of their place in the organization. The reading interview has given rise to a Questionnaire that generates a client's input into his or her Individual Program Plan.

Analysis of Results

Another dimension is obtained by considering the clients as a group and analysing the results in terms of the disability groups represented in the sample. Some patterns do emerge, but the results can only be regarded as indicators of the need to watch for more information that may confirm or contradict an apparent trend in the available data.

(i) Population.
23 clients' interviews were recorded. Details of the disabilities of these clients were obtained from admission data in individual files. Four categories of disability could be distinguished. Psychiatric disability, intellectual disability, disability attributable to brain disease or injury, and multiple disabilities. Clients in the last group were those whose disability resulted from a combination of factors, e.g. moderate I.D. plus behaviour problems (See Table 2).
The high number of clients in Brain Injured category reflects special selection and referral for interview of this group (see client selection above).

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF CLIENTS IN EACH DISABILITY CATEGORY

Psychiatric Disability	Intellectual Disability	Brain Injury or Disease	Multiple Disabilities
2	4	11	6

(ii) Motivation.
Motivation was regarded as positive if the client expressed any desire to participate in reading activities of any kind, negative if the client dismissed the possibility of participating in any such activity. (See Table 3)
The most remarkable result is the relatively low number of clients with multiple disabilities, who were positively motivated towards reading activities. This may reflect the greater effort required by clients in this group for this kind of activity.

TABLE 3: NUMBER OF CLIENTS POSITIVELY MOTIVATED TOWARDS READING ACTIVITIES

Psychiatric Disability	Intellectual Disability	Brain Injury or Disease	Multiple Disabilities
2 out of 2	4 out of 4	9 out of 11	2 out of 6

Interests. The range of interests mentioned in the individual interviews is displayed in Table 4. The interests have been sub-categorized so as to group together similar responses for comparative purposes. (The content of these sub-categories is explained in Tables 5 to 8.)

TABLE 4: TYPES OF INTERESTS MENTIONED

Psychiatric Disability	Intellectual Disability	Brain Injury or Disease	Multiple Disabilities
Literacy Material Preferred	Literacy Material Preferred	Literacy Material Preferred	Literacy Material Preferred
Learning Activities	Learning Activities	Learning Activities	
	Individual Activities	Individual Activities	Individual Activities
	Social Activities	Social Activities	

Clients in all four disability categories mentioned types of literacy material they liked to read (or listen to, in the case of story tapes). Learning activities were mentioned by clients in three out of four of the categories, as were individual activities. Clients in two of the four disability categories mentioned social activities.

In the discussion which follows, it is important to bear in mind the fact that there are unequal numbers of clients in each disability category, and therefore rigorous comparisons are inappropriate. Further research, with more elegant sampling techniques, is necessary to produce firm conclusions.

TABLE 5: INTERESTS: PREFERRED LITERACY MATERIALS

Psychiatric Disability	Intellectual Disability	Brain Injury or Disease	Multiple Disabilities
	Magazines	Magazines	Magazines
	T.V. guides	T.V. guides	T.V. guides
The Bible		The Bible	
		Comics	Comics
	Stories on Tape	Stories on Tape	
		Recipe Books	Commando Books
Non-fiction		Mystery Stories	
		Cowboy Books	
		Books on Housekeeping	
		Writing in a diary	-Help with writing letters

The items in Table 5 are not arranged in order of popularity, but in an attempt to indicate the materials nominated by clients in more than one category. If one had to start a literacy program for these twenty-three people, as an isolated group, Table 5 would form the basis of the initial shopping list.

TABLE 6: INTERESTS: LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Psychiatric Disability	Intellectual Disability	Brain Injury or Disease	Multiple Disabilities
Correspondence courses		TAFE cooking course.	
	Work with SWARA teacher on maths.	Work with SWARA teacher on fractions.	
	Maths computer	Using computer.	
	Practise writing, spelling and numbers at home.	Practice reading Ladybird books at home.	
Learn how to counsel others.	Word search puzzles.	Learn to type. Learn macrame.	

The items in Table 6 are arranged to make obvious the similarities between the responses of clients in the various categories. There are positive indications here of the kinds of learning activities worth including on the literacy program "menu": TAFE courses could be accessed; people working with SWARA teacher on Maths will probably be willing to try some reading and writing with him; computers are popular; some clinets practise literacy

skills at home; learning new skills will motivate some; word games appeal to others.

The fact that none of the six clients with multiple disabilities mentioned any learning activities among their interests may once again indicate that acquiring new skills is difficult for people in this category.

TABLE 7: INTERESTS: INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES

Psychiatric Disability	Intellectual Disability	Brain Injury or Disease	Multiple Disabilities
	Care for pet		Care for pet
	Watch T.V.	Listening to records.	Listening to records.
	Hobbies	**Hobbies**	**Hobbies**
	Body Building	Build model planes.	Woodwork.
		Knitting and Crochet.	Stamp Collecting.
		Drawing.	Travel Planning
		Ride push bike	
	Everyday Activities		**Everyday Activities**
	Car maintenance.		Gardening
			Shopping
			Cooking
			Farmwork

Interests were sub-categorized as "individual activities" if they could be enjoyed alone, but this does not mean that clients actually performed these tasks without assistance or company. Neither of the clients with psychiatric disabilities mentioned any such interests, but this is probably due to the small number in this category.

TABLE 8: INTERESTS: SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Psychiatric Disability	Intellectual Disability	Brain Injury or Disease	Multiple Disabilities
	Young People's Group.	Youth Group	
	Sport	Bowling	
		Visiting the Speedway.	
	Going to camp.		
	Outings with girlfriend.		
		Talking	
		Cards	
		Draughts	
		Chess	

Interests were classified as "social activities" if they implied the company of other people in the same activity.

Two groups of clients mentioned social activities among their interests; the intellectually disabled and the brain injured. Both groups mentioned Youth Group and sport, but whereas the I.D. group mentioned social outings (going to camp, outings with girlfriend) the Brain Injured group mentioned sedentary and small group activities (talking, cards, draughts and chess).

The fact that no clients in either the psychiatric disability category or the category of multiple disabilities mentioned social activities among their interests raises some interesting questions. Would this trend be confirmed or contradicted by more extensive sampling? Would a more structured interview elicit a different response? Or do people with psychiatric disabilities or multiple disabilities find it difficult to participate in social activities? The answers to these questions are at present being sought (see Appendix III) and will help staff at SWARA in their program planning to provide useful services for SWARA's clients.

USE OF RESULTS

Anyone setting up from scratch a literacy program for disabled adults is going to need some basis on which to accumulate resources and organize group work. By finding out what clients prefer in literacy materials (and what their interests are) the teacher can make economical decisions regarding the purchase or improvisation of literacy materials. Group activities can be shared by people who may differ in reading capabilities but share an interest that motivates them to read. An interview is an appropriate means of collecting this information.

Most importantly, the interview establishes the relationship between a teacher and an adult student. Students are not passive receptacles into which teachers pour reading skills. Adult students, in particular, have significant experiences and interests which they are willing to share with their teachers and peers, given an opportunity. Wise teachers listen, and choose to present material to their students that will build on these interests. The preliminary interview is simply a slightly more formal means of "listening". Analysing the information so gained can suggest ways of providing a more meaningful service, especially in the case of adults with disabilities.

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(from Otto & Smith, (1980) pp. 107-109)

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APPENDIX *II*: RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS

The teacher providing teaching time at SWARA twice a week offered a very wide range of resources and programs, as listed below. He assisted students to choose an activity from the available "menu" that would match their interests and provide enough challenge to maintain motivation. The diversity of the programs are added as new interests emerge. The teacher provides students with some time to work without his assistance and intervention. This assists them to improve their concentration, and encourages them to have confidence to continue learning activities independently. (Resources and Programs are not correlated in this listing.)

Resources	Programs
Tutor System (12 blocks and 24 blocks)	Computer literacy.
Texas Instruments - programmed units Speak and Spell, Speak and Read, Speak and Math, Dataman, Little Professor.	Computer programming. Reading music.
Language Master (Bell and Howell). magnetic tape cards.	Playing simple tunes on keyboard.
Calculators used for various activities (Finding patterns, counting by 2s, 3s, etc., relating fractions to decimals using functions of scientific calculator.)	Discussion of - (a) everyday home problems (b) household maintenance (c) advertising and values (d) news items
Books Crosswords, Join the dots, Matching patterns. S.C.R. Maths Books, Levels 1 and 2.	Languages: German. Italian (relating it to English). Building Vocabulary
Worksheets Vocabulary, concepts, etc.	First steps in Reading: (1) use of Initial Teaching Alphabet (ITA) (2) Reading simple stories in ITA (3) Transition to picture cued reading using regular print.

APPENDIX III: MORE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW ABOUT SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

An Extract from Section E. of the Questionaire designed to generate a client's input to his or her Individual program Plan.

E. SELF CARE, LEISURE AND VOCATIONAL

1. Are you living at home with family or somewhere else?

   .....

   .....

2. Tell me about the things you do to take care of yourself (cooking, housework, shopping, washing etc.)

   .....

   .....

3. Who do you spend leisure time with in the evenings and at the weekends?

   .....

   .....

4. Do you have friends to enjoy leisure activities with?

   .....

   .....

5. What leisure activities do you enjoy?

   .....

   .....

WRITING IS FOR EVERYO[illegible]

AILEEN TRELOAR

Once upon a time, I used to advertise writing workshops for tutors. When they realized they would be required to write they stayed away in droves.

Smith says, in an essay, "**Demonstrations, Engagement and Sensitivity: A Revised Approach to Language Learning.**" (1983), that we give unconscious demonstrations all the time. These are often so powerful that they negate the effect of our conscious activity. This is very relevant when it comes to Writing. Few tutors indicate any pleasure in writing compositions at school. They speak of grammar, spelling, paragraphs, introductions, conclusions; rarely do they mention that writing might have something it wants to say. They are so fearful of their inadequacies in those formal areas that they both avoid writing themselves and reinforce those same fears in their students. Their approach is all too often of the castor oil variety, "Come and take your nasty medicine – it's good for you." No wonder tutors tell me, "My student does not want to write." Student? The messages are loud and clear.

I am trickier these days and advertize workshops for tutors which will help students to write. Until tutors are relaxed and happy about writing themselves they will not be able to help students to write. The purpose of the writing workshop then is to give tutors a pleasant writing experience, to help them to name their learning experience and then to place it in a theoretical framework.

Since it is in the nature of a taming exercise it is important for me to participate fully and to demonstrate positive behaviour. To begin, I talk about some topic, maybe a recent experience I have had, maybe a family story or something that had made me laugh or cry, or angry or sad or happy, then I put them in groups of 2 or 3 and ask them to tell each other a story about whatever theme I have developed. This never presents problems. The only difficulty is to stop them talking.

It is rare for a group not to enjoy this experience. Talking about something well known is not a threatening experience. In the talking, the story begins to take shape, the listeners' questions help to bring out what is important, what may be missing. The next step is for each of us, me included, to write the story we told. There may be mild shock at this point, but having told the story and talked about it, it is not so difficult to take the next step which is to write it. The problem of "I don't know what to write about" does not arise.

If there is time, it is not difficult to move into the next phase of the writing process, editing the story, by going back to the original pairs and discussing whether it says what the writer wants it to say as well as it can be said. When the story is in the form which satisfies the writer it is then time for proof-reading. Paragraphs are where they are wanted, grammar has been corrected and finally, spelling is checked. By this stage, the entire writing process has been experienced. Writing no longer holds the terrors it acquired at school and tutors are in a position to give messages, conscious and unconscious, of comfort with writing.

With the writing task completed it is then time to talk about the activity. They are encouraged to explore their feelings, old and new, their attitudes and assumptions formed at school, their new understanding of what writing can be. Finally, all this learning is fitted into a theoretical framework.

Language is speaking and listening, reading and writing, interlinked, interdependent, linked with thinking. By talking and listening before writing then reading, tutors have experienced how this is; they know one influences and aids the other. Experiencing whole language in this way is a far more effective way of learning than hearing it described.

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BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN PRISON LITERACY PROGRAMMES

STEPHEN BLACK

There is a general belief that low literacy levels are a feature of prisoner populations, a belief substantiated somewhat by the NSW Department of Corrective Services claim that 30% of prisoners "are virtually illiterate" (Annual Report 1984, p.22). As a teacher and subsequently an educational administrator in NSW prisons from 1980, it has concerned me that given this belief, relatively few low-literate prisoners seem to be participating in the literacy programmes available in almost every NSW prison (I am referring here mainly to native English speaking prisoners rather than non-English speaking background prisoners, and also to male rather than female prisoners. 95% of NSW prisoners are male). Of course relative non-participation in adult literacy programmes by those considered to be "in need" is not confined to prisons. In general community adult literacy programmes in Australia and overseas, it is widely recognised that only a small fraction of the population in need actually participate in these programmes (see Dymock 1983, p.94; Kindler 1987; Jones & Charnley 1978, p.3; Cook 1977, p.122). Nevertheless, it would assist educational programme organisers in prisons in making their programmes more effective, to be more aware of the "barriers" to participation in prison literacy programmes, and some of the ways in which they may be overcome. Further, it is my contention which I hope to demonstrate in this paper, that prisons present a number of additional barriers to participation in literacy programmes to those which might be faced by adults in the general community.

Barriers to Participation in adult education are usually classified in terms of situational, institutional and dispositional barriers (Cross 1981; Rubenson 1985). Informational barriers are also sometimes seen as a separate category (Darkenwald 1980; Darkenwald & Merriam 1982). Situational barriers often include costs (e.g. for tuition, child care, books), lack of time, or home/job responsibilities. Institutional barriers may include the inconvenient scheduling of classes or inappropriate courses. Dispositional barriers are those "feelings" which discourage participation including one's attitudes, interests, values and generally - self perceptions about oneself as a learner. And informational barriers usually involve lack of awareness or knowledge about educational provision. Whilst situational barriers are often cited in survey type research as being of greater significance than the other barriers (Cross 1981, p.100), in view of the adult literacy context of this paper, where dispositional factors associated with previous school failure are likely to play an important role, dispositional barriers will receive most attention.

1. Dispositional Barriers

A number of different aspects of dispositional barriers to participation in prison literacy programmes can be identified. In this section it is proposed to focus on four main aspects: those associated with embarrassment, anxiety and the "dummy image"; perceptions about education in prison; the nature of the learning environment, and finally, prisoner apathy.

Embarrassment, anxiety and the "dummy image"

From research into adult literacy we know that many low-literate adults, due largely to their failure in previous educational activities (usually at school), suffer embarrassment and anxiety about returning to a formal literacy learning environment. They are concerned that as adults they have failed to come to terms with the basic skills mastered by most schoolchildren. In consequence their self image is often poor and they may internalise attributions by others that they are "dummies". (See Australian studies by Grant 1985; U.K. studies by Jones & Charnley 1978, 1979,

and Levine 1986, and U.S. studies by Eberle & Robinson 1980 and Johnstone 1985). These factors not surprisingly act as major deterrants or barriers to their participation in adult literacy programmes. They are likely to be particularly applicable to low-literate prisoners for whom there is some evidence that many have had unsuccessful learning experiences at school. Gorta (1982) for example, found in her study of NSW parolees that 89% failed to complete a level beyond 3rd form high school, and many left school at an early age. Committal to juvenile institutions is also indicative of disrupted and likely unsuccessful schooling experiences (approximately one third of NSW prisoners stated such an experience according to the *Census of Prisoners* 1974, p.8).

In prisons there is also an additional factor to consider – peer group influence. In the confined close community of prisons, prisoners may be very wary of exposing their weaknesses. As one Victorian prisoner explained, in order to survive well in prison it is necessary to put on a certain front, and "... if they let that fall for any reason they feel that they've had it. They're going to go under." (Brennan & Brennan 1984, p.138). Related to this context Braithwaite (1980, p.192-3) makes reference to the "bravado requirements of inmate culture" which would seem to have some influence on whether prisoners participate in literacy programmes. Consider for example the sensitivity and underlining "bravado" of one NSW prisoner I interviewed at the suggestion by another prisoner that he was in need of help with reading and writing:

"Oh me cell mate said, 'why don't you learn to do reading and that a bit more,' and I got in bit of a quarrel with him ... you know, I thought he was getting smart."

Most certainly many prisoners have a fear that through participating in a literacy programme other prisoners could make life difficult for them. This is implicit in the following comments from two NSW prisoners:

– "they (other prisoners) get to know about these things, and people talk and crims can be very nasty ... I guess they like to point and be vindictive towards people."

– "I think you're more worried about one bloke going out in the yard and say 'this bloke's a dummy' or something."

Perceptions about education in prisons

This section is closely related to the preceding one as it is concerned with the 'front' prisoners need to maintain in order to cope with prison life and how education generally is perceived by prisoners.

There is some research which suggests that programmes which have some 'rehabilitative' element, that seem to align them with 'the system', are subject to suspicion and condemnation by prisoners (see Boshier 1983, p.26 in relation to North American prisoners). Brennan & Brennan for example, in their study of Victorian prisoners cite the view of one prisoner:

"the education centre, that's where the fault lies ... in this prison in particular ... there should be a distinct line between custodial and education ... and they should be very clear which side they're on, and they're on the wrong side." (p.29).

Brennan & Brennan believe that prison education needs to strengthen its stance and offer a real option to the operation of the institution:

"... it was often repeated that if teachers remain observably non-custodial members of the institution and work towards building trust between teachers and learners, then education can become a more effective force within the incarcerating context. Education is to be seen as a human alternative to the range of custodial regulations which dominate the lives of those detained or imprisoned ... In prison particularly, the issue of whose side you are on dominates all daily interactions. It is doubtful that any person or group can remain neutral for long." (p.237).

If prison literacy programmes can be

perceived by prisoners as a non-aligned "human alternative" then low-literate prisoners may feel less pressure from fellow prisoners not to participate in them.

Unfortunately overseas evidence (mainly in the U.S.) indicates that prison education is usually "accommodative" to the prison system and in consequence becomes merely "symbolic" rather than substantive (Goldin & Thomas 1984; Collins 1988).

The nature of the learning environment

This section is about aspects such as teacher-student relations, teaching methods and curriculum content which comprise the total learning environment of a prison literacy programme. Without going into any great detail, it should be recognised that there are certain teaching principles; examples of good practice in the teaching of literacy to adults which, if not adhered to, are likely to present barriers to participation in a prison literacy programme. If for example, teachers don't acknowledge and implement student self directed learning; if they are not prepared to work with students in a spirit of "collaborative planning"; if they are not prepared to adopt a "whole person" approach and to show a personal concern for their students; if they use teaching methodologies which focus exclusively on discrete language skills devoid of meaning or purpose, or if teaching activities are perceived by students to have little utilitarian value, then participation is unlikely. Or if participation does take place, it may soon be followed by disillusionment and dropout.

Prisoner apathy

The Report of the Royal Commission into NSW prisons (1978) cited comments by prison staff to the effect that prisoners have no interest in bettering themselves (p.447-448), and they provide as evidence, poor attendance in remedial programmes. Raynor (1980) explains the situation she experienced whilst teaching in a NSW Womens' prison. She refers to a "prison lethargy, a feeling of 'what's the point', I'll do it tomorrow', 'I suppose I want to do it but', 'not today' which is part of the atmosphere and is all pervading." Some researchers however attribute this apparent apathy or lack of motivation by prisoners to improve their education to prison systems themselves which place little value on education. Possibly of much significance here are the negative attitudes to education shown by many prison staff (see Parkinson 1983, p.69 in reference to education in British prisons). How many of us for example have come across prison officers who make disparaging remarks along the lines of 'I don't know why you bother. You can't teach them anything.'

Certainly a number of different aspects of the prison system have the capacity to reduce one's motivations to participate in education programmes. Notwithstanding negative attitudes there is also for example, the lack of privacy (for study), the frequent transfers between institutions (shanghais) and overriding worries about criminal justice matters or welfare issues.

2. Situational barriers

One might assume that this second major category of barriers is largely absent in the context of participation in prison literacy programmes. For example, prisoners are unlikely to lack the time considering they are "doing time", prison literacy programmes also don't cost anything, and home and job responsibilities and certainly transport problems would appear inapplicable. However, on further reflection, some of these barriers may be at work. Prisoners may be "doing time", but they do not necessarily have much control over their time (Harris 1983). A number of studies have also indicated the clash of interests between prison jobs and education (Boshier 1983; Goldin & Thomas 1984; McCarthy 1985), which may leave many prisoners, through involvement in their prison jobs, without the time to attend classes. Thus time and job responsibilities may be significant barriers. Discrepancies in prisoner pay scales which result in prison "sweepers" being paid more than "students", and some evidence of prisoners in both Victoria and NSW having their pay reduced if they participate in education

classes during work time (McLennon & Simmons 1986, p.4; Stewart & Donnelly 1986, p.28) indicates there may also be for some prisoners, financial costs to participating in education programmes.

3. Institutional barriers

This category of barriers is normally meant to refer to "educational" institutions, though in the context of this paper, there is likely to be some overlap between the institutional barriers of the prison and those of education within the prison.

Inconvenient scheduling of classes is likely to be one of the main barriers here. Many literacy programmes for example, are held in the evening and thus have to compete with the T.V., videos and sporting and recreational activities (Stewart & Donnelly 1986, p.31-32).

Insufficient teaching hours may also cause a limit to be put on class numbers, with consequent "waiting lists". One NSW prisoner I interviewed stated the situation he faced in one country prison:

"You sign up and put your name down if you want to do education right?... and you've got to wait ... I was there for two months, that's how long I had to wait ... two months ... it's not good."

Overcrowded conditions and lack of teacher time for individual attention also has its frustrations, and presents barriers:

"this Peter, the bloke that comes in here ... he ... um ... I've been trying to get him by himself so that he can sit down and teach me to read ... I can't let blokes come into the room every five minutes ... Have you got any paper? Have you got any sticky paper? He hasn't got the time ... He's not helping me at all ... I can't get to see him you know, cos blokes keep coming in the room."

4. Informational barriers

The dissemination of information about educational programmes may be seen to represent an "agency pull" factor which Levine (1986, p.112) identifies (along with objective and subjective "push" factors) as responsible for an initial contact with an educational organisation. Lack of information or mis-information may be seen as a barrier to participation, and this barrier seems to be operating in some prison systems. Goldin & Thomas (1984) for example, referring to prisons in the U.S. write about "information control" by prison staff and indicate how it has affected participation in education programmes:

"This restriction of program information decreased participation, and created an impression that students might not be sufficiently interested to justify further programmes." (p.127).

McCarthy (1985) similarly points to information barriers in Canadian prisons, "Officials consistently fail to inform incoming inmates of the educational options and instead direct them to other activities." (p.445). According to Dickens (1986, p.8-9) in a NSW prison study, most prisoners find out about education courses either directly from the education officer or from notices, though in another NSW study by McLennan & Simmons (1986, p.11) it was found that most prisoners relied on word of mouth from other prisoners.

Overcoming the barriers

Having considered some of the main barriers to participation in prison literacy programmes, it remains in this paper to look at ways of overcoming them. Before doing so however, it should be recognised that many low-literate prisoners (like many low-literate adults in the general community) may find participation in a literacy programme unappealing whatever the form it might take. Levine (1980, p.103) for example, refers to adults with "instrumental orientations" who may have only limited literacy problems in particular contexts, and who don't feel the need for tuition. And also at the other extreme there are those adults with "personal orientations" who may be so deeply ashamed that tuition is just too daunting for them.

It should also be recognised that because a prisoner may lack literacy skills according to some normative criteria, it does not follow that he will feel the urgent need to improve his literacy skills, or even want to. It may be that a prisoner has made an accommodation to his low-literacy. He may consider he can function quite effectively with a network of friends to provide assistance. With access to the knowledge he feels he needs, and possibly with other pressing problems to sort out before redressing his literacy deficits becomes a priority, he may be unlikely to participate in any literacy programme. However, this need not detract from the significance of the barriers to participation mentioned so far in this paper; barriers which can to some extent be overcome. What follows are recommendations which I consider would go some way to overcoming these barriers:

1. Improve the image of literacy programmes in prisons

If we accept Brennan & Brennan's (1984) argument that education, and in this context literacy programmes, should be seen as a "human alternative" to the regulatory aspects of the prison system, then there is the need for these programmes to display relative independence. If literacy programmes are to maximise participation then they need to have credibility in the eyes of the prisoner population and in particular they need to provide a service on a par with that available in the general community. In the NSW prison context this would require literacy programmes being removed from the administrative and financial responsibility of the Department of Corrective Services (DCS), and be replaced instead by an external educational organisation such as TAFE. Such a move would have clear benefits. The appointment of some permanent literacy teaching staff, extensive resource back-up and staff development opportunities would indicate a serious commitment to improving the literacy levels of prisoners. It may also provide an important "bridge" to prisoners joining a literacy programme upon release. But most importantly, it would provide credibility in the eyes of prisoners. Unfortunately while literacy programmes remain within the province of the DCS they will retain their marginal status – temporary programmes run by temporary staff – under resourced programmes forever subject to the vicissitudes of the finances of the day.

2. Expand non-formal literacy provision utilising the community of prisoners

This may appear contradictory in view of the above recommendation to improve formal literacy provision, but it isn't. A lot of research concerned with reaching so called hard-to-reach adults (including low-literate adults) indicates there are limits to what can be achieved in attracting students to formal educational environments. Local community organised non-formal educational environments offer an alternative to reach these groups (Darkenwald 1980, p.10; Brockett 1984, p.18; Fitzgerald 1984). Applied to the prison context, this would mean other prisoners may have an integral role in assisting low-literate prisoners. This happens all the time anyway; low-literate prisoners often confide their literacy problems to trusted fellow prisoners who then assist them with reading and writing letters and in other situations requiring literacy. Thus, prisoners who might normally be too embarrassed to attend "classes" are receiving assistance. However, to capitalise on this, greater efforts should be made to train fellow prisoners to tutor low-literate prisoners. All the evidence points to the success of prisoner tutor training programmes when tried (Black 1985; Literacy and Prisons Seminar 1980; Lehmann 1985; Bates & Flynn 1987). On-going tutor training programmes with follow-up and resource assistance should be a feature of all major prisons. As in the general community, prisons need a variety of modes of literacy provision, formal and non-formal, to widen the reach to those in need.

3. Remove financial disincentives to participation

It should go without saying that a prisoner

who wishes to participate in a literacy programme should not be prevented from doing so because he loses pay or receives less pay as a student compared to some janitorial type prison job. This requires a re-formulation of policy on prisoner pay and negotiation with prison industries.

4. Improve recruitment to and information about literacy programmes

At present little attempt is made to even identify low-literate prisoners. Some screening method should be adopted. It may in fact simply involve an obligation on all prison reception committees to question new arrivals about their literacy needs and inform them of the literacy provision available.

Closer liaison could be established between education staff and psychologists whose classification tests invariably include a verbal reasoning component from which it may be possible to infer those with likely literacy problems (Black 1984) who could then be followed up by education staff.

Unfortunately there seems to be little active recruitment for literacy students in NSW prisons, and perhaps in prisons generally. Boshier (1983) cites a report from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education 91978) which states that:

"... inmates should be counselled and tested to a point where they have sufficient information upon which to base a decision to participate."

The report goes on to mention that educational personnel should have "regular and frequent opportunities to solicit" inmates who have previously declined "... given optimal conditions and positive consequences known to flow from participation it should be possible for prison educators to change the behaviour of non-participants." (Boshier 1983, p.34).

5. Expand and publicise services available in literacy programmes

Borrowing from one of Levine's "palliatives", literacy programmes could provide a "walk in" service in addition to their teaching role. They could publicise a letter writing/reading service, help in writing applications, how to fill out applications for legal aid, for an appeal, for parole. Teachers could become specialists in getting results – how to write in a report or expository genre that will maximise the chances of an application being favourably received. Publicising these services could encourage prisoners to frequent the classroom without a committment to participate as students, though in fact many may end up becoming students.

These are just some of the ways of overcoming the barriers to participation in prison literacy programmes that have been mentioned in this paper. They don't provide all the answers – far from it, they are simply recommendations presented for discussion. As I have tried to make clear, there will always be low-literate prisoners (and low-literate adults in the general community) who will be unlikely participants in literacy programmes no matter what. But there will also be others for whom so much more can be done.

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LITERACY FUNDING: THE VICTORIAN EXPERIENCE

HEATHER HAUGHTON
JULIE HURLEY

Genesis:

The Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council was founded in 1978. It is an independent state-wide association of literacy workers and supporters whose chief functions are:

- operating as an information agency through its office and its publications e.g. *FINE PRINT*, *Can You Read This?* (pamphlet), *Contacts List* (annual directory) and the new *Broadsheet*.

- lobbying government and other agencies for better support for adult literacy and basic education (a.l.b.e.), e.g. to have regional co-ordinator positions established in each of 11 TAFE regions 1983-7, to have the A.L.B.E. Unit set up, to maintain literacy funds at their present level and to seek more.

- educating its members, and others, through workshops, seminars, state conference, and general media publicity.

- setting policies and guidelines for its own working procedures, and offering policy to government. Drawing up policy and guidelines e.g. on integration, on admission to a.l.b.e. programs for clients of other organizations or services.

Exodus:

TAFE arrived late on the a.l.b.e. scene in Victoria. By the time programs were established in all major TAFE Colleges the community education movement was strong. Continuing growth in a.l.b.e. in that sector has been notable particularly since regional co-ordinators have been in place. Programs in Victoria are located in

21 TAFE Colleges including Council of Adult Education
76 Community houses or neighbourhood learning centres
8 Community health centres or health-related organizations
16 Adult education centres
15 Municipal libraries
16 Other locations.

Numbers:

If location of programs highlights the difference between Victoria and other states, funding mirrors them. In a state such as N.S.W., about $4 million recurrent state funding is directed into a.l.b.e. VALBEC in 1987-88 has been engaged in lobbying activities to increase Victoria's recurrent base of $1.4 million to $3 million.

The present allocation runs approximately thus:

College recurrent $1.4m. — This provides for over ⅛ of total student enrolments.

Other sources – annual or other short term basis.

1.	States Grants	$300,000	
2.	Community based provider funds	$75,000	These amounts
3.	Voluntary adult learning groups funds	$85,000	provide for
4.	New funding 88/89 under NLP	$400,000	under ⅛ of total
5.	Other e.g. Trusts, foundations	$5,000	student enrolments.
	TOTAL:	$865,000	

First and Second Samuel:

A large number of Victoria's literacy workers placed in important structural support positions are paid from the annual or short term sources outlined above. Some Regional co-ordinators are among them, many local co-ordinators, and the one effective full-time VALBEC position.

A regional adult literacy co-ordinator

- supports local co-ordinators
- provides education consultancy
- is a community developer
- actively supports VALBEC activities
- works with community and government organizations other than TAFE
- elects a R.A.L.C. representative to the advisory committee of the A.L.B.E. Unit
- may draw salary in whole or in part from one or more sources
- may be answerable variously to a Regional TAFE Board, a TAFE College or a Committee.

Judges:

By 1985 it was becoming increasingly clear that literacy work and workers would be lost unless there were greater commitment by the State Government. Joan Kirner's inaugural A.J.A. Nelson lecture to the 1984 A.C.A.L. Conference held in Melbourne indicated the way to go. However, we realized that unless we had decent statistics on which to rest our case we would not succeed.

VALBEC successfully applied to The Myer Foundation for $10,500 to employ a researcher.

The Myer Foundation's guidelines for judging projects were:

1.	Prevention:	"it is important to consider the cause as well as the effect of disadvantage."
2.	Community management:	"...initiatives based on principles of community management and the building of community support services."
3.	Human justice and access to services:	"...funds for policy research, information dissemination and community education."
4.	Consumer management/ self help:	"...all people in our society have the capacity to manage their own lives in ways which suit them best."

VALBEC was able to relate literacy activities to each of the guidelines mentioned above, and in 1986/87 a researcher, Jan Kindler, was employed.

Psalms:

In April 1987 the Victorian Government released its economic strategy entitled "Victoria. The Next Decade." Here are some key quotes:

1. "There is a considerable gap to be made up if the knowledge and skills base of the Victorian economy is to be brought into alignment with that of the leading industrialized economies." p. 85.

2. "The economic and social justice strategies are complementary to each other." p. 11.

3. (need to produce higher value-added goods and services) will require "fundamental changes in our skills training processes, so that training and retraining (are) available to a much wider range of individuals." p. 17.

From February to August 1987 we were planning our first State Conference, using Jan's final draft research document as a basis for mailouts to all M.P.'s, to targetted groups of M.P.'s especially interested in the economic strategy and social justice policies, and to individual politicians.

The title of Jan's final report and the theme of the conference were to be **Literacy Matters.**

- to our usual conference participants
- to decision makers
- to the wider community.

The research and the conference were promoted in media publicity mainly during July and August 1987. We decided to invite decision makers in government (and other) circles to form a panel in the second plenary session to give their views on the importance of literacy in their sectors, having already been given information from our side ahead of the event.

Proverbs:

1. It's later than you think.

One M.P. asked a question of the Treasurer, who handed down the memo to Mr Ian Kennedy then Director of the Economic Strategy Implementation Unit, Department of Management and Budget.

He visited the VALBEC office a couple of times, and over what has been recognized as an historic cappucino – (visitors to VALBEC know that for peace and quiet we adjourn to a nearby coffee shop) – he asked us to prepare a strategy plan for the next 5 years, not for $300,000 which is what we thought we wanted, but for $3,000,000 – and please deliver it in two days time!

2. It appears that if you want government to take a funding plan seriously you don't just ask for money to secure the status quo, you need also to ask for funds for future development.

3. Our working strategy was to turn the government's rhetoric back to it: show how we could offer a model, already in place and working, whereby government could effect the plans it had written about in its own policy documents.

Song of Songs:

Once VALBEC had kick-started the DMB processes, it left the running to Ian Kennedy. He in turn consulted with other Departments notably TAFE, and most recently with the newly created Division of Further Education.

He has come up with a plan that is music to our ears, but its status remains that of an internal Cabinet document which may or may not get up at Budget time (early August).

1 Local provision: co-ordinators' salaries and operating budgets
2 Extra TAFE College places
3 Salaries at regional and state level
4 Sessional tutors
5 Staff development

6 Workplace project: extra funds
7 Survey of the incidence of literacy difficulties
8 Technology
9 Publicity.

Isaiah:

Out of order, but has a chapter beginning:

"Ho everyone that thirsteth,
come ye to the waters."!

We hope that what is now a joint submission from Department of Management and Budget, Division of Further Education (Education Ministry) and Social Justice Unit (Dept. of Premier) will succeed at Budget time.

What next in the land of milk and honey?

- vigilance to ensure that the issue of adult literacy is kept in front of the government
- efforts to maintain VALBEC's direct link to DFE staff once they become absorbed into DFE's evolving central structure
- need to hold together the disparate groups that make up VALBEC, so the lobbying effort is not split
- determination to keep VALBEC a viable independent organization, capable of taking political action when necessary.

August to December 1988 will be spent in assessing our position, which ever way the State Budget takes us; and for the New Testament, ring us in January, 1989.

Hello? Hello? Hello!

Dr Roy Lundin

Using Interactive Communication Technologies to Improve Literacy

1. Access to learning

Issues relating to several aspects of literacy are being well explored in this conference in other sessions, but there are specific issues which are relevant to the use of new technologies. With estimates of illiteracy reaching 25 percent of the population in Canada, the USA and Australia it is time to look at some innovative methods to tackle the problem.

In particular, **access** to literacy programs must be addressed. In this regard, the first thought is usually related to geographical distance. While this is certainly relevant, it is only one form of isolation - others being ethnic/cultural, language, social, economic, professional, exceptionality (handicaps and gifts). It is often the case that these forms of isolation can compound one another when, for example, language and distance are both forms of disadvantage.

It is possible through the use of telecommunications to overcome most if not all forms of isolation. By improving access in these ways it is not only possible to meet the literacy needs of individuals, but also to make important contributions to the socio-economic development of the nation.

2. The technologies

The range of communication and information technologies is enormous and increasing. Trends indicate both diversity and convergence. Single-function units like printers or facsimiles are becoming smarter and multi-functional. On the other hand, many functions are converging through digital systems based mainly on the microcomputer.

It is not the intention here to give an exhaustive catalogue of these technologies. Rather, it may be useful to talk about types of functions and applications. There are four basic categories - at present - describing the types of interactive technologies that are very relevant to education and to the scope of this paper.

Audio: loudspeaking telephones, audio teleconferencing terminals, bridges, ISDN equipment, PABX's with conference bridges, voice mail, telecommunications information management systems (TIMS), echo cancellers.

Audiographic: facsimile, slow scan television, videophones, telewriters, writing/graphic tablets, electronic pens, interactive computer graphics systems and accessories, scanners, modems, videotex, electronic black/white boards (transmission type), video capture boards/systems, hybrids.

Video: codecs, compressed motion video systems, micro-computer-based video and integrated (audio-graphic-video) systems, VSAT's, optical fibre and affiliated hardware, consoles and rollabouts, laser products.

Computer: computer conferencing software, electronic mail systems, multiplexers, encryption systems.

3. Applications

Broadly speaking, the whole area of concern here may be called 'teleconferencing'. With regard to applications they may be used for the following purposes:

education/training
administration/organisation
services
research
social

With regard to education, each type of technology or medium has specific attributes which give it its power or effectiveness for certain purposes. Knowledge of these attributes is crucial to ensure efficient and effective use of the media. That is, the design of educational programs and the strategies employed should be such that they exploit these unique attributes.

Technology doesn't deny the values in education, it puts another set of options into play for both learners and teachers. It can, in fact, result in an enriched educational environment.

With regard to the use of teleconferencing in literacy, there are three case studies of particular relevance to this conference.

Aboriginal Adult Literacy Project in South Australia

The Adelaide College of TAFE, through the initiatives of John Kirk, started an audioteleconference program of literacy of adult aborigines in rural and remote areas. Funded originally by a federal government grant, the course started in 1985 and is being continued to date.

The first intake of participants exceeded the expectations of everyone by their record of 100 percent success rate, and a very high rate has been maintained. Experts are now revising their theories of aboriginal learning styles in the light of this experience.

Distance Literacy Projects in Victoria

The Victorian TAFE Off-Campus Network produced five adult literacy programs using audioteleconferencing during July 1987 to January 1988. The success of these programs for the 78 participants was rather dramatic in two respects:

(a) the successful completion rate was 80 percent and 72 percent for the audioteleconference groups compared to the Victorian TAFE Off-Campus Network overall average of 43 percent.

(b) the average cost per student in the audioteleconferencing project was **half** that for the average cost per student starting traditional semester subjects.

Jones (1988, pp 32-3) reports on the common elements of the successful programs as follows:

Common Elements in the Four successful Programs

An analysis of the four successful programs showed these elements were present in each program:

(a) Motivation of the student was considered crucial in the selection of students. Students were given an outline of the program, aims of the course, the time involvement each week and a clear understanding of everyone's responsibilities. Each student interviewed was given an option to decide if they wanted to participate in the program.

(b) All students in the successful programs had the support of a volunteer tutor or another group tutor at other times apart from the teleconference.

(c) Educational resources/material used which were student-centred or theme-based and highlighted student needs and interests achieved the highest rate of response.

(d) Group tutors were very conscious of evaluating each session. This was achieved by using two or more of the following evaluation techniques:

  (i) asking students questions about each teleconference session, i.e. whether they found it helpful/interesting; whether they were confused by anything, etc.
  (ii) keeping a chart on the participation of students
  (iii) making notes of students' comments and literacy needs.

(e) The four teleconference group tutors offered support and encouragement to the participants outside the teleconference using two or more of the following:

  (i) face-to-face meetings during the project (where possible)
  (ii) weekly newsletter
  (iii) personal letters
  (iv) personal phone calls

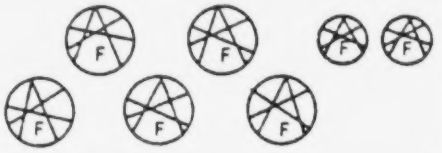
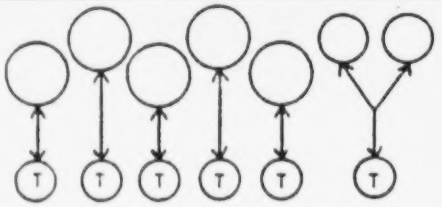
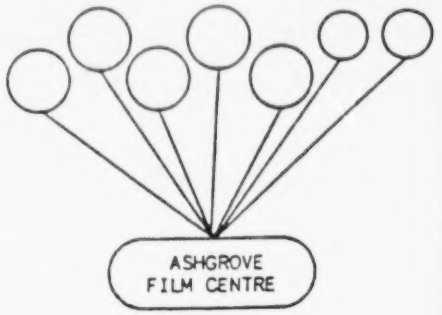
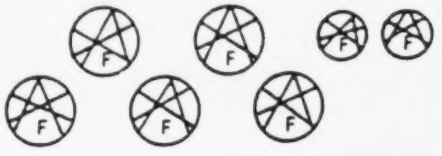
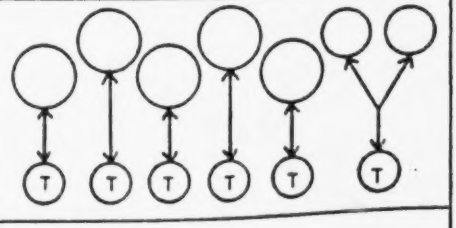
  Consistent backup and contact with each student was considered crucial to the continuing participation of students.

(f) There was a mix of male/female, age and ability levels in the four programs.

Early Literacy Inservice Course (ELIC) in Queensland

During 1986 the Queensland Education Department decided to use a 'telecourse' approach to provide an inservice course to primary teachers. A combination of teletutoring, audioteleconferencing and satellite video using the Queensland Q-NET system were used to deliver the programs to 120 teachers in 10 provincial centres.

Of particular interest in this project was the structure of the media-mix during each two-hour program. This is shown in the following figure:

TIME	ACTIVITY	
4.30	Each group meets to: . share between-unit-activities; and . read and discuss material in the coursebook relating to the content of this workshop, and preparing to discuss this with the tutor. (Field Officers with each group assist as group leaders.)	
4.45	Teleconference with tutor. Telephone link with tutor to discuss between-unit-activities, readings, individual concerns and prepared discussion points.	
5.00	Television broadcast 'SKYTALKING'. A test pattern will be displayed before segment starts. Your tutor will check with you to make sure that your centre is receiving the test pattern. . 'You Asked For It' short video clips providing information and demonstrations in response to particular needs expressed by participants. . Content presentation - this is supported by a variety of specially prepared pre-recorded video clips of classroom practices and the videos produced by the South Australian Film Corporation to support ELIC.	
5.45	Group discussion - guided by the Field Officers, each group considers the implications of the content of 'Skytalking' and undertakes particular discussion activities.	
6.00	Teleconference with tutor. Telephone link with tutor to emphasise and explain. Opportunities for tutor to discuss individual problems.	
6.30	Finish	

Typical Operational Format of a Telecourse Session

Teachers reported that they found the system of delivery successful for the most part, and that the course had a significant impact of the way they were teaching.

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STUDENTS IN ACCESS CLASSES

A report on a survey conducted at the Noarlunga Access Centre, 1987.

SHIRLEY CORNISH

WHY DO THEY START?

Aim of Survey

To find out why students first start attending Access classes, what they like about classes, what benefits they receive from attending, what difficulties they have with study and any suggestions they may have for improvements to the Access Centre.

The Students

Forty, out of exactly fifty, students answered the survey. A pre-requisite for participating in the survey was, to have attended the Access Centre for a least one term.

SOME STATISTICS

1. "What subjects do you study"

English only	15
Mathematics only	8
English and Maths	17

Four students studied English and other courses: two Basic Social Science, one Basic Science and one Ancient History.

2. Sex – twenty four students were female and sixteen were male.

3. "How much homework do you do?"

Hours per week	No of students
0	7
1	2
2-3	11
4-5	10
6-10	5
15	3
20	2

4. "What is your age?"

	No of students
16-19	5
20-29	10
30-39	14
40-49	7
50-59	2
60+	2

WHY DO THEY STAY?

Five questions were asked. Direct quotations from the survey are included in the text.

Question 1: "Why did you first start attending the Access Centre?"

Here is a summary of the nine reasons given.

1. General educational improvement (9 students)
2. To gain specific English skills (6 students)
3. As a basis for further study (4 students)
4. To pass entrance tests (3 students)
5. For help with other T.A.F.E. courses (2 students)
6. For promotion at work (2 students)
7. To help children with schoolwork (2 students)
8. As a hobby (2 students)
9. Following a recommendation (2 students)
10. Misread question (8 students).

Comments about these reasons:

1. Nine students stated general education aims:

"Learn up on my Maths and English",

"To further my education",
"Because I needed more Maths to improve myself and because I never had a chance as a kid as I spent most of my life in an orphanage".

2. Six students stated specific English skills they wished to learn:

"I have some writing to do and wish to do it properly",
"I want to be able to fill out forms by myself",
"To learn to spell."

From this question and others on the survey and talking to students I have observed that students approach learning literacy and numeracy from two different educational experiences. One group feel that they missed out at school. They feel very embarrassed about their lack of education and lack of confidence in doing anything that will show this. They often think that this is because there is something wrong with either themselves, their schooling or their background. They often have a great need to talk about their problems with education.

The other group of students have reasonable positive feelings about their education. They come to build on skills already learnt; some because they enjoy study and others because they need to improve English or Maths skills for a specific purpose.

3. Four students attend as a basis for further study; two wish to do Matriculation.

4. Three students began classes to pass entrance tests – one for the Navy, one for the Army and one for E.T.S.A.

5. Two receive help for other T.A.F.E. courses; one for essay writing in an Art Course and one for Maths in an Electronic Technician Course.

6. Two students come to improve their writing skills to gain promotion – one in E.T.S.A., and the other in Telecom.

7. Two students come to help their children with their schoolwork. Many students have commented in class that their families benefit from them studying. Spouses help with homework and are proud of their involvement and some even become students themselves. Children and parents share their schoolwork. Children imitate their parents' study habits. Parents also feel more confident in helping children's problems along to the Access Centre. There is an old saying, "Educate the mother and you educate the child". For these days "mother" should be replaced by "parent".

8. Two students attend as a hobby.
"It gets me involved in something other than talking about baby's dirty nappies, first tooth, etc".

9. Two students attend following recommendations – one from a school principal, one from a doctor.

10. Unfortunately eight students misread the question as "When did you first start attending the Access Centre?"

Question 2: "What do you like about the Access Centre?"

Responses

"I like the lack of pressure. I feel comfortable with my teacher and fellow students. I enjoy the company of adults".

"I like being able to ask for help if I need it. As a child I was afraid to say I couldn't understand something".

"Everything".

"Friendliness of teachers. You can come in 5-10 minutes early or late without disrupting the class. If I want a coffee, I don't have to leave the class and can drink it while I study. I like the partitions which I try to sit behind for less interference while I study".

"The small classes are a good idea because you feel that you fit in and everyone seems more friendly".

".....finding out that my problems are not as bad as I think and that others have the same or more problems than I have".

"that each one of us work to our own ability".

"The staff have an excellent approach to the students, this is shown by their eagerness and patient persistence needed to achieve progress".

Observations

Many studies commented on "the atmosphere" which was described as "friendly", "informal", "relaxed", "nice", "quiet", "easy going", "pleasant", "good", and "better than school". More specifically, they like the friendliness of other students and teachers, the lack of pressure, being able to receive individual help and being able to work at their own pace.

Students frequently mentioned that they benefited from interaction with other students. As a tutor, I feel that this is particularly important.

Students can get a lot of positive feedback from each other – some even help fellow students with work they have recently learnt. Other students' enthusiasm is often contagious and sharing problems with people in a similar situation often leads to a solution.

Question 3: "What have you gained from attending the Access Centre? This may be academic, social or any other factors."

Twenty one students mentioned academic progress. Some made general comments on improved understanding and knowledge of subjects; others stated specific certificates and grades achieved.

"A vast improvement in my English skills generally".
"The feeling of getting further education which I've missed in earlier schooling".
"Learning to study".
"A certificate (credit) in Further English, Part I".

Twelve students specifically mentioned an increase in "confidence". Others mentioned similar benefits which indicated an increase in self esteem.

"More confidence in myself. I'm learning that English is a skill learnt and not a sign of intelligence".
"Developing a sense of purpose".
"I feel better about myself. Not having much of an education made me feel inferior when I was with educated people. The trouble is, now that I've started learning I want more and my poor brain might not be able to stand up to the strain".
"My confidence and self esteem have been expanded by the social and academic intercourse".

I feel that these comments are very significant. They exemplify what adult literacy is all about. The context of the above comments is often referred to as "empowering people", that is, giving students the confidence and abilities to improve their lives.

Twelve students also mentioned social benefits.

"Talking to people easier",
"I find contact with other students very informative",
"I have met many different people and I enjoy attending the centre".

Academic success, improved confidence and a rewarding social atmosphere are three benefits students receive.

Question 4: "Do you have any difficulties concerning study? If so what are they?"

Fourteen students stated that they did not have any difficulties. Twelve mentioned time related problems.

"I have to work in studies between my job and home".
"Studying at home is difficult at the moment".
"I never seem to have the time at home to study".

Perhaps it is true that these students have not yet come to terms with the effort needed for success in study.

Eight students had general problems in understanding and coping with the work; two more had problems in understanding work at [illegible]ne and two had difficulty in concent[illegible]g, one mentioned motivation

and another memory.

"There are too many words which are unknown to me",
"I am a slow learner",
"Sometimes things I don't understand but soon after some explaining I then know",
"Depending on the topic, sometimes a lack of motivation."

Question 5: "Do you have any suggestions for improvements that could be made to the Access Centre?"

Only eighteen students answered this question.

Three students:
- were disturbed by people talking.
- suggested changes to some of the course content.

Two students asked for:
- a ban on smoking,
- more single desks,
- less air conditioning in summer.

One student asked for:
- more books,
- a computer,
- better chairs.

Three asked for an extension of the program:
- a full time course,
- Year 12,
- other subjects.

It is not unusual for students to show an interest in other subjects besides English and Maths. In fact, some students express the wish to cover the full school curriculum - perhaps wishing to make up for what they missed at school. The new "Basic Social Science" course from Adelaide T.A.F.E. is useful for this type of student. More courses, at this level, on health, biology, world and local politics, machines, history and geography, aimed at adult interests, would be useful in the Access Centre.

Conclusion

Students first attend the Access Centre for a variety of reasons. There are however, two main groups of students. Firstly, there are students who have negative feelings about their own education. They feel that they "missed out" at school and now hope that they can make up for lost opportunities. Secondly, there are those who are reasonably confident about their schooling but now wish to learn specific English and Maths skills for a particular purpose such as to pass entrance tests, to go on to further study, to write letters, to gain promotion, to help with present studies or to help children.

Most students felt that they made academic improvement from attending the Access Centre. A large percentage also gained an increase in confidence and self esteem; this is perhaps as, or more, important than the academic gains. Most students also found study socially beneficial.

Most students liked the atmosphere of the Access Centre and in particular the friendliness of other students and the teachers, the lack of pressure, being able to receive individual help and being able to work at their own pace.

THEY CAN READ - TRY ANOTHER WAY

KERRY ROCK
NEIL WALES
YVONNE RUSSELL

THE LANGUAGE ACQUISITION THEORY

This program endorses the Whole-Language theory. That is, the language learner is actively engaged in the comprehension and expression of meaning tied to the context in which the language encounter occurs (Altwerger & Bird, 1982, P.72). The language encounters can involve speaking, listening, reading and writing experiences and in the process of making meaning, the language user is constantly accumulating knowledge of how the language works. This linguistic knowledge or data can be utilized in subsequent speaking, listening, reading and writing experiences and supports growth and development in each of these areas. This view of the language learner/user was conceptualised by Burke in a visual metaphor called "The Linguistic Data Pool". The language learner/user has a personal pool of language data which is constantly added to and drawn upon in language encounters, and speaking, listening, reading and writing are seen as parallel and interdependent expressions of the generalised language process, not separate components of the language (Atwell, 1983, P24; Crafton, 1983, P43; Cambourne, 1987, P18; Turbill, 1987 P225; Cambourne & Turbill, 1987, P35).

The whole language view of language acquisition and the language learner implies significant changes in teaching practices and assessment/evaluation procedures.

The Whole-Language perspective emphasises that language is acquired through use in real social situations. The fundamental motivating factor in language development is the need to communicate and to understand and be understood as members of the language group (Crafton, 1983, P33). Children actively engage in learning how to use the language and its cueing systems through involvement with 'wholes' of language in meaningful situations (Atwell, 1983, P24; Altwerger et al, 1987, P145). In other words, the language encounter provides enough information about the underlying systems of language so that the learner will have all the data available for working out how all the pieces fit together and interact with one another (Cambourne, 1987, P7). Language is easiest to learn when it is whole, relevant, real, in context, and functional for the user (Halliday, cited by Altwerger & Bird, 1982, P72; Halliday, cited by Crafton, 1983, P35; Goodman, 1982, P88).

In the first place it has to be acknowledged that students have their own storehouse of linguistic data. In this respect, a literacy program needs to be student-centred to allow students to draw upon and develop and extend their existing skills in a supportive non-threatening learning environment within a framework of meaningful, 'whole' language encounters (Cambourne & Turbill, 1987, P37; NSW Department of Education, 1987, P14).

As Goodman argues, the degree to which literacy events are meaningful and purposeful and have value for the individual will influence the development of literacy skills (1984, PP.103,107).

Through these encounters, they can also see that reading, writing, speaking and listening are interdependent and inextricably tied in the language learning process and that each of these expressions supports growth and development in literacy (Harste, Woodward & Burke, cited by Cambourne & Turbill, 1987, P36). That is to say, they can make connections between the language expressions which will assist them in the meaning-making

process and enhance their understanding of the way the language operates.

ONE APPROACH

This project began as a response to the reading behaviour of a group of intellectually disabled adults. The predominant reading strategy used by these students is to decode for sound. This limits their comprehension performance and makes reading a laborious and painstaking task, that is not readily undertaken, one that is not enjoyable.

These negative aspects dominate disabled persons' feelings about reading to the point that their development as readers is hindered. They approach reading situations without confidence and avoid them in everyday life.

This program aims to broaden the student's use of reading strategies by developing an understanding of the concept of context and demonstrating how contextual clues can assist in understanding reading material, and enjoying reading.

The main thrust of the program is to make the students aware of the context of a story and, linked with this, the strategy of prediction. The reader should make some general predictions about the context of a story and begin reading with those predictions firmly in mind. The idea is to look for words and ideas in the story that confirm the predictions about context.

In a more specific sense, prediction takes place during the reading process as the reader searches for meaning. He/she makes a prediction about what comes next and looks ahead because of a need to confirm the prediction or looks back to check a prediction. These two strategies are referred to as "forward referencing" and "backward referencing" (Cambourne, 1979).

As the reader samples ahead, confirms or checks, then confirms, a mental storyline accumulates and the reader visualizes an image of the story thus far. This image should match with the continuing development of context and is the basis for further prediction. Prediction becomes the over-riding reading strategy, and basic means of comprehending.

The problem with these intellectual disabled students is they rely solely on the grapho-phonic cueing system. They decode for sound, and once that is achieved, move on to the next word with the sole aim of decoding it. Whether the next word ties in with the meaning of the story is of no consequence. Their aim is to get a phonic response for the graphic symbol.

So, these students have to be made aware of:

context,
how to predict,
the in-built redundancy in language and
how to keep these things in mind when forward and backward referencing.

It was decided to use a Language Experience approach whereby an experience was organized, spoken about and transcribed to create a readily identifiable context for the story. This has the advantage of using the language of the students with its appropriate semantic and syntactic components.

Special considerations need to be taken into account when dealing with intellectually disabled students. The following section deals with these considerations.

The first thing that needs to be considered is "What is intellectual disablement?" For the purposes of this study the definition used is the one which was formulated by Dr Marc Gold (1980) of the University of Illinois.

"A level of functioning which requires from society significantly above average training procedures and superior assets in adaptive behaviour manifested throughout life."

This definition shows that an intellectually disabled adult is someone:

1. whose level of functioning requires significantly above-average training procedures and superior adaptive behaviour from trainers and others working with that person.

2. who is characterized by the level of intervention, assistance, direction, and effort required for him or her to learn, and not by limitations on what he or she can learn.

3. whose maximum functioning is governed by the availability of training strategies and the amount of resources the education system and the community are willing to provide, and the person's biological potential.

Many intellectually disabled adults receive little training on their way to adulthood, and rarely, if any, experience in an environment related to their needs and abilities. Many are over-protected. Intellectually disabled adults have a past history of many failures and unattained goals. Accustomed to this failure, they may not even try to succeed; may not, unless their teachers create successful learning experiences for them.

The computer literacy program introduces students to a different mode of learning. The students had never worked with a computer before and that meant that a failure syndrome had not developed with this apparatus.

So, as Gold suggests, it was time "to try another way".

When planning the program it was important to take into account the special learning disabilities that are common to intellectually handicapped students and to note their implications for the teacher. I have listed these below.

Attention Span. Regular adult students can work for 40-50 minutes without a break. The attention span of Intellectually Disabled Adults is much less. To hold their attention, one must provide more attractive material and correlate learning activities to their personal needs and interests.

Poor Memory. Intellectually disabled adults have poorer short term and long term memory than regular students. They need to have material presented in small segments, related to something they already know, with lots of repetition and practice.

Motoric Learner. Intellectually disabled adults learn by observing and doing, rather than listening. Show and Tell teaching techniques are important. To do this, teachers need to:

1. Minimise abstract and maximise concrete information.

2. Present information through all senses.

3. Show similarities and differences, relationships, causes and effects.

4. Point out what should be observed, and allow student to show that the observation has been made and understood.

5. Intellectually disabled adults usually have limited vocabulary. At all times the teacher should be looking to extend the vocabulary of the students. However, the teacher must use an appropriate level of language in order that the learner does not become frustrated.

6. The teacher must ensure that instructions are kept simple and that the language and terminology used is understood by the learner. Too many instructions or highly abstract language can lead to frustration and confusion.

Intellectually disabled adults often suffer from low self esteem. The teacher has the responsibility of ensuring that the overall working environment of the classroom is positive and reinforcing. This can be partly achieved through careful planning and by providing opportunity for success; ensuring that adult-to-adult interactions occur when possible; by valuing the learner; and through consideration of what are the learner's perceived needs and reasons for attending the course.

Other important aspects to consider when teaching intellectually disabled students, indeed any students, are motivation and feedback. In a teaching situation, feedback and motivation are manipulated by reinforcers. Reinforcement should be given immediately after an action is performed at an acceptable level.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aims

1. To broaden the reading strategies of learning disabled students.

2. To improve the comprehension levels in learning disabled students.

3. To make reading an enjoyable activity for reading disabled students.

Objectives

1. To develop an understanding of the concept of context.

2. To understand that the words and ideas in a story are linked to the context of the story.

3. To recognise that particular words in a story are linked together by meaning.

4. To be able to build up an image of the story in your mind as you read.

5. To search for cues to meaning forward and backward from the point of actual reading.

6. To understand that through reading, you build up a vocabulary of words that can be recognized on sight.

USING THE COMPUTER

The use of a word processing program to type, edit and print the language experience stories is strongly recommended. The computer is an excellent motivator; the procedures of a basic program such as "Aussie Fred" – by Apple are easily learned; the typing overcomes the problem of poor handwriting, the print out gives a very professional publication standard; it is becoming an integral part of living and as such is well accepted by adult learners. Following is a basic introduction module to the word processor.

Strategies

1. Excursions – movement outside the four walls of the classroom. These excursions provide the students with the opportunity to relate to one another in a different range of social situations and to explore their shared experience. It is most important to keep in mind that the students are adults and those outings give them the opportunity to relate to one another as adults in the 'real world' and to use language to meet the demands of the social situation. These social activities outside the classroom, provide a 'language in action' context and stimulus for subsequent language practice in an 'active, student-centred learning environment'.

The excursions provide ideas that are the basis for language experience stories that are written on the white board, and during the follow-up lesson, typed out on the computer for printing. Discussion needs to take place. Excursions must be discussed, ideas recorded, meaningful language written, read, typed and published.

2. Major Events – Major events such as the Olympics or the Melbourne Cup cannot be ignored. The emphasis of this program is using language. The students have opinions and must be encouraged to express them. These events provide yet another excellent context medium. The class can discuss the Olympics, the story can be written on the board and then read.

When the Winter Olympics were on, the class watched a video of the games. We discussed the events, then read stories about the ice hockey and the figure skating. The class wrote a group story and also individual stories. These were typed into the computer and then printed. A reading resource was developed. They were able to take these home and read each other's stories. The students were told to bring a

story back if they did not understand it. If this happened, and it did, the story was photocopied and the class were asked to discuss the story. Ideas were shared and different interpretations were looked at. They were constantly being exposed to spoken and written language. At all times vocabulary development was encouraged and reading for meaning strategies emphasized, use of context, backward and forward referencing and imaging.

3. Films – These provide an excellent medium in which to look at the idea of context and meaning, because the scene is set early and students can discuss possible outcomes based on setting (context). The students are encouraged to talk about the movie and share their views with others. In the case of the "Sound of Music", the storyline was developed by using songs from the movie.

The opening scene and song looked at the setting. The students were encouraged to discuss what they saw and how they felt.

Their thoughts were recorded on the board to build up the idea that the film was set in another country.

An interesting aspect of this treatment concerns the appeal of music and song as learning mediums. Something about music promotes the memory of words. Teaching students the songs promotes good reading strategies – e.g. predicting words through meaning and rhyme – and the music provides interest and enjoyment. It is highly motivational.

4. Student's Experiences/ Teacher's Experiences – The teacher shares with the students an experience he/she has had. Discussion follows, then the teacher writes her experience on the white board.

The students are invited to have a go at reading it. They are constantly reminded that the story is about the teacher's holiday. Thus, reinforcing the idea of context. The students are encouraged to look back in the text to get meaning (backward referencing) or to look forward in the text (forward referencing). The students are told to think about what they are reading and to actively hypothesise about what will happen next.

The students should be shown how to recognize cues from the context. They need to be shown that reading is about getting meaning from print and not merely an exercise in decoding. It is most important that they develop an understanding of the concept of context and that they understand that words and ideas in a story are linked to the context of the story.

CONCLUSION

This program allows intellectually disabled students to rebuild a sense of self in relation to their literacy skills and to re-evaluate reading as they actively use the language in purposeful, challenging and enjoyable ways. (N.S.W. Dept. of Education, 1987, P20).

The emphasis is on using the language in all its expressions to make meaning out of the student's individual experiences and class excursions and activities. As Goodman argues, "We should follow the axiom: no language without experience and no experience without language. (Gollasch, 1982, P285).

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MANAGING THE COMPREHENSION GAP WITH HEALTH INSTRUCTIONS

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Introduction

Millions of people do not understand what health care people are talking about. Over 23 million functionally illiterate adults in the United States and 800 million world wide would benefit if health instructions were designed to fit their literacy level.

Our objective today is to discuss the process of making health instructions more understandable for those millions. We will discuss three formats for instructions: written, oral, and visual. We will conclude with a set of guidelines that could help to make health instructions more understandable.

The Problem

In the United States a major study of literacy was conducted by Northcutt in the mid 70's. The study showed that 19.8% of the adult American population (one out of every five) lack the literacy skills needed to function effectively in today's society. A reading ability at the sixth school grade level (primary education level in Australia) is considered the minimum for literacy competency.

Is the literacy problem improving? Not really. In September 1986 a report was published on literacy abilities of young Americans – those entering the work force, aged 21 to 25. Over 3600 adults were tested in from a national sample. The result? Almost 20% could not read documents above the 7th grade level.

The American experience has some parallels with the Australian experience with literacy because a substantial percentage of the population is made up from a wide variety of ethnic groups.

Another unfortunate parallel is that Australian Aborigines and American Indians have a rapidly growing incidence of diabetes. Successful control of diabetes is by self management, which requires understanding the health care instructions for diet, exercise, and perhaps insulin injections.

The authors have been working for over ten years as trainers of health care providers in methods to simplify health instructions.

Simplification is indeed needed. The readability levels of 291 written health instructions covering fifteen major categories of diseases and health information were tested. Most of these instructions (over 60 percent) would not be understood by half the adults in the United States. (Fig. 1).

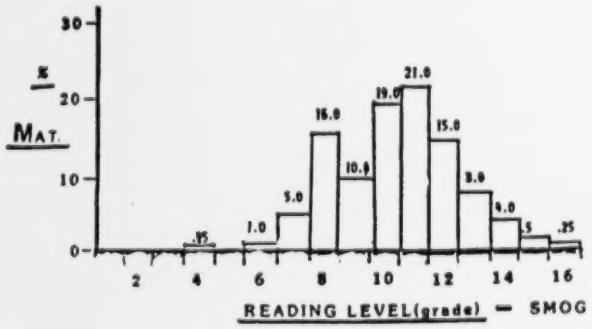

FIG. 1. Reading Levels of 291 Health Instructions

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Poor readers, and marginal readers, usually must struggle to decode words they read. Thus, they often lose the meaning by the time they reach the end of the sentence. We would like you now to briefly experience what it is like to be barely or marginally literate. Please join in reading – out loud – this sentence from a health instruction. (A backward "mirror image" sentence is shown here).

This example gives us an appreciation of the task of decoding. It begins to highlight the differences between poor readers and good readers. A brief review of these differences may sharpen our perspective.

Nature of Reading

Good Readers...	Poor Readers...
• uses prior knowledge	• random association
• fluency	• hesitant
• gets help	• skip over
• interested	• not focussed
• continuous	• episodic

FIG. 2. Characteristics of Good vs. Poor Readers

Making Health Instructions More Understandable

Health instructions often describe the disease process or physiology principles and then may go on to describe behaviors. What we are faced with in making health instructions responsive to the problems of poor readers is a reorganization of the order in which information is given, an emphasis on the action patients need to take, and elimination of the less needed information.

Let us review the Levels of the Reading Process in a schematic way to see where our intervention can best take place in health instructions.

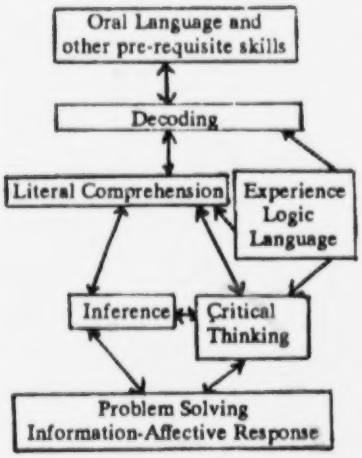

FIG. 3. Levels in the Reading Process

Tutor Root, Jane Lit. Vol. of Am. Syracuse, NY.

1. Compatibility with logic, language, and experience

We can intervene in the instruction design process by assuring that the logic, language and experience of the instruction has a reasonable match with the logic language and experience of the patient. Many health instructions are so heavy on the disease process and scientific explanations that a serious mismatch occurs. The reader "drops out" before ever reaching the section of the instruction that describes the behaviors required for disease management.

The following figure diagrams the compatibility equation for logic, language and experience.

Comprehension

When

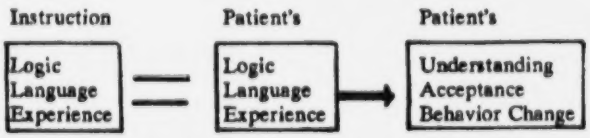

FIG. 4. Compatibility between the reader's and the instruction's logic, language and experience is needed if comprehension is to take place.

Where do we begin with the process of how we understand new information? A good place to begin is with the brain's memory systems, and the one that we are most concerned about is the short term memory. Why? Because our access to behavior change is through the short term memory and thence to long term memory. Let us examine more closely what must happen to make instructions more readily grasped and remembered:

Short-term memory system:

- electrical circuits
- when patient actively responds
- chemical changes
- short time span
- small storage

FIG. 5. Short-term memory system: changes must occur for us to remember.

The short time span, and the small storage capacity make it necessary to get the message across rapidly. There is a limit to the number of independent items the brain can hold in short term storage – usually just seven items for well trained people. Thus, health instructions with lists of eight or more "to do" items will not be remembered – not even the first seven!

Furthermore, information is processed more quickly when we can tie it to something we already know. This will be examined more fully because it is of critical importance in health instructions.

Why do we forget? For many reasons:

Many factors make us forget:

- stress
- suppression
- distraction
- information overload
- no immediate use
- no exercise of the brain

FIG. 6 Many factors make us forget.

The first three factors are familiar to all of us but the last three are not as well understood in the practice of patient education.

The limited storage capacity of the short term memory means that people can remember only a very few items at a given time. But the instructors often give more information than the memory can absorb. Information needs to be "chunked" with what is already known before additional information is given in order for it to be remembered.

(Audience participation exercise in the Rule of Seven)

How does this apply to health instructions? Observe how many independent items are on this list:

SELF URINE TESTING FOR KETONES

After reading this booklet, the diabetic should be able to explain:

- what ketones are
- why ketones are produced
- what happens when ketones are produced
- why test for ketones
- when to test for ketones
- how to test for ketones
- what Ames ketone tests are available
- when to call the doctor
- what to do during "sick days"

FIG. 7 Self Urine Testing for Ketones.

How can the patient be helped to remember these nine points? By chunking the information and providing "Road Signs" to help the memory:

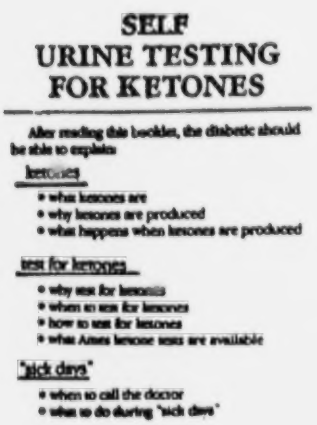
SELF
URINE TESTING
FOR KETONES
After reading this booklet, the diabetic should be able to explain
ketones
• what ketones are
• why ketones are produced
• what happens when ketones are produced
test for ketones
• why test for ketones
• when to test for ketones
• how to test for ketones
• what Ames ketone tests are available
"sick days"
• when to call the doctor
• what to do during "sick days"

FIG. 8 Revised list of Self Urine Testing for Ketones.

Summary of Comprehension:

When planning a new health instruction, design in a compatibility of logic, language, and experience. If you are already using a health instruction and you encounter comprehension difficulties, look for the problem in one or more of these areas: logic, language, and experience.

Written Instructions:

Health education is basically a written culture. People often receive some form of paper with written instructions on procedure, hygiene, diet, or medication.

We have seen earlier that, in the United States, more than half the written health instructions are over the heads of most of the adult population.

Health care providers are often exhorted to "simplify" their instructions. Let us now examine ways of doing this.

(a) Simplifying by limiting the content:

One of the best ways to simplify a health instruction is to focus on the behavior and knowledge the patient needs most. A good approach is to make a list, in order of priority, of the specific behavior and knowledge items, and then write about only the top one or two items on the list. You must resist including lower priority items. When it comes to understanding instructions, "less means more".

(b) Reducing the literacy demand:

- Use conversational form. Say "You must.." rather than "The patient must.."
- To the extent that it sounds natural, use short words and short sentences.
- Organize the instructions in the order the patient must use them.
- Place key points first and last.
- Provide "road signs" (headers) to guide the reader as to what is coming next.
- Consider simple visuals to illustrate the text.
- Use context examples to explain hard words.

Build feedback into your instruction via questions relating to the desired behaviors stated in the instruction. Request a verbal response or some action.

(c) Pretesting the Instruction (learner verification)

- Test the reading level with one of the reading prediction formulas.
- Pretest instruction with a sample of patients for compatibility with their logic, language, and experience. Pretest questions should include those that start with "Tell me..." or "Show me how you would..".

The above guidelines can be used to simplify existing written instructions as well as the production of new ones. To rewrite an existing instruction start by circling the behaviors and necessary knowledge statements. Then select only the one or two most important statements from the patient's needs standpoint, and apply the guidelines listed above.

If you were to remember only 3 things from this discussion they would be:

1. Focus on desired behaviors.

2. Use conversational style.

3. Verify learning with patients.

Obtaining information from patients, such as a medical history, is different when there is a language barrier. One approach developed by Literacy Volunteers of America at Rochester, New York together with local hospitals was to prepare a booklet and audio tapes of the common health questions in many languages. The patient may read (or listen to) the question and respond by pointing to one or more pictorial answers, or, the nurse may read the question using the phonetics.

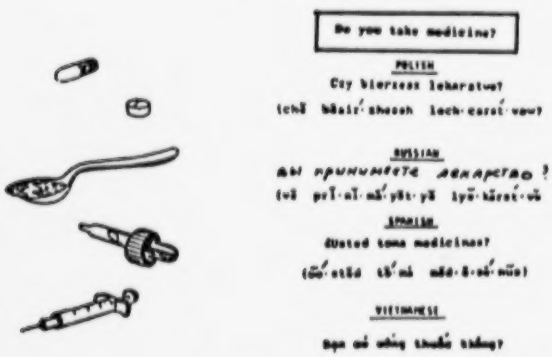

FIG. 9 Health Questions in Many Languages.

Oral Instructions

Listening is one of the primary means of learning. In recognition of this, oral instruction presented either directly or via audio tapes replayed on the radio or at a community clinic are often the preferred method for instruction.

But oral instructions carry a literacy demand too, and sometimes may require more knowledge than the reader possesses. The following verbatim example from an audio tape on gout requires a knowledge of physics and chemistry.

"The blood becomes saturated beyond its capacity to hold uric acid in solution. When this happens, the uric acid precipitates out in crystals, very much the way water in saturated air in the winter condenses out in crystalline snowflakes. The needle- shaped crystals tend to pile up at joints, such as the big toe." etc.

When oral instructions are combined with a demonstration people tend to understand more readily. But in-person demonstrations can reach only a small portion of the populations, especially rural populations. Audio tapes replayed on the radio can reach a much larger number of people. How do we obtain audio tapes on health instructions that people will understand?

One of the best ways to obtain suitable audio taped instructions is to make them yourself. This is easily done using inexpensive audio recorder/players. And one need not be a professional announcer to make realistic, interesting and understandable taped instructions.

The guidelines for written instructions presented above are quite applicable to audio tapes as well. Instructions that focus on one or two behavior and knowledge needs are likely to be understood.

Let us examine the ways that you can produce your own audio tapes and make them effective for your target population.

- Decide on priority of behavior and knowledge required by the reader.
- Consider the best approach for your audiences:

1. Monologue (best for short, simple message)

2. Dialogue: discussion, Q & A, or storytelling. (Best for generating interest, and for more complex messages, and where more time can be taken. Good for a radio "series".)

- Make a time-line drawing showing the time you plan to allot to each topic or segment. Short audio tapes of 3 to 5

minutes are best. This is consistent with the experience of Migrant Educational TV in Australia where short, 8 to 10 minute segments were found to be optimum.

- Pretest with a sample from the target population.

(Samples of tapes played here.)

An alternative to this process is to tape record a verbal instruction as it is being presented to a patient. The output will be a tape with the naturalness of conversation and an active voice. You may use this tape directly, or you may transcribe and edit it and use it as written instruction.

Comprehension is facilitated if you prepare your audience in advance by telling them what they are to hear on the tape (or see on a film strip) so that they have cues to help them look for the important messages. You can also build in feedback by asking questions and pausing for replies.

In summary, audio tapes should focus on the key behavior and knowledge elements of the health instruction. You can make your own audio tapes for use at home, in clinic or for radio replay. If you do, these instructions can be directed to the most important behaviors desired, and are likely to be understood by your audience.

We've discussed written and oral instructions. Now it is time to discuss the use of visuals.

Visual Instruction

Most health care professionals have a clinical orientation to pictures, sketches, photos etc. They think in terms of an anatomical or cross-sectional view of the body or body cells.

What we are presenting today is a perspective of thinking of visuals from the point of view of desired patient behaviors rather than that of the disease process.

When designing or using visuals with poor readers or non-readers, keep in mind that there are several conditions that affect their learning from pictures or any kind of visual. Three of these conditions which are important for health instructions are:

- The eye movement is random rather than systematic from left to right and therefore the eye often must be cued to the key message.

- Mental integration of visual images to arrive at the meaning of the message is likely to be slower because the logic, language, or experience of the learner may be very different from that implied in the visual.

- Distinguishing between right and wrong ways of carrying out an instruction is often beyond the analytical skills of many poor readers. It is best to show only the right ways.

Research on learning as well as experience in teaching show that poor readers learn best from visuals that ...

1. Direct their eyes to the message

Use the short attention span to maximize learning by including cues to the visual as illustrated by bold print, and also by "X's" in these instructions (show two examples).

2. Use lots of white space

Show only the part of the body necessary for the instruction. As shown in this sketch only the foot is needed to show diabetics how to cut toenails.

Poor readers need white space in visuals to reduce distraction and to help them focus.

A good example is shown in this illustration of how to respond to symptoms of a possible heart attack. Cut out all distractions that can take attention away from the message.

3. Reinforce the text

Visuals should reinforce, amplify, clarify the behavior described in the text. This visual of a person saying "NO THANKS" to dessert reinforces the diet message in the text. The visual of the Tanzanian woman

cleaning up her home to prevent mt malaria breeding places amplifies the message in the title. For many poor readers, the visual may be their only way of learning.

Cartoons are another useful form of visual instruction. Cartoons should be human in form, rather than imaginary figures that are not compatible with the reader's experience. This cartoon of a drop of blood in the form of a round figured human wearing brightly striped long socks is unlikely to communicate the intended message.

4. They can identify with

Visuals need to be human, life-like as shown in this picture of Blacks taking care of themselves for hypertension. The food portrayed should be similar to what they generally eat, as shown in this example of "Yes" and "No" foods for diet.

In summary, to make visuals do their share of the teaching, make them tie in closely to the behavior you want, show only the correct behavior, and eliminate the distractions.

Summary of Guidelines for Effective Instructions for non-readers.

The same principles apply for all modes of instruction. It is only the application that differs. A summary of these guidelines is as follows:

1. Make an assessment of the literacy profile of your audience. (Use local or national data, or test a sample of your audience)

2. Plan the instruction by presenting only the most needed patient behavior or knowledge information that will achieve the key learning objective.

3. Consider the suitability of the instruction in terms of the logic, language and experience of your audience.

4. Present written instructions in a conversational style, and use an active voice.

5. Make your own audio taped instructions. Keep segments to no more than 5 minutes duration. Make use of local talent to prepare instructions in the language or dialect that will be understood.

6. Visuals should present only the correct behavior desired and should be behavior oriented. Use lots of white space in the visuals, and few words.

7. Pretest any instruction with a sample from the population who will use it, and revise freely based on their advice.

We've discussed many ways to improve health instructions for poor and marginal readers. Now, what are practical ways for those in the literacy training field to make health care more understandable to non-readers? Here are a few possibilities:

1. Include primary health care materials or topics in your literacy training materials.

2. Help others to recognize that illiteracy is a lack of skill and not a mark of pathology. Languaging skills can be learned and we can help by making our communication more understandable.

3. Collaborate with hospitals and clinics to help health care providers communicate more effectively with non-readers or marginal readers.

4. Help others to appreciate that comprehension takes time, that they should expect to use repetition, and that they should provide words of "reward" for successful learning.

5. Allow time in your program plans for development and pretesting of materials for clients with low or marginal literacy skills.

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LITERACY & NUMERACY PROVISION FOR MILDLY INTELLECTUALLY DISABLED ADULTS

JEANETTE LEARMONT

Swinburne College of TAFE Victoria, offers a training program for volunteers from the community which prepares them to tutor mildly intellectually disabled adults. After completion of the training program, each tutor is matched with a student whom he/she meets for approximately one hour each week, usually at a municipal library. Many tutors continue tutoring their students for one to two years.

The broad aim of the course for the volunteers, is to enable them to develop tutoring skills in literacy and numeracy for mildly intellectually disabled adults in conjunction with using appropriate resource materials. For their students, the course aims to enable them to develop functional numeracy and literacy skills and possibly use such skills as a basis for participation in further education and/or employment.

Generally each year the program caters for 40 to 45 tutor/student pairs with approximately 20 tutors being trained annually. The training program comprises 7 × 2 hour sessions; it is very practical in its orientation. Emphasis is on the tutor's active participation and application of concepts presented in each of the seven sessions. A range of training strategies are used including discussions with previously matched tutor/student pairs, visits to sheltered workshops, preparation of a series of lessons for 'phantom students', development of resource materials, as well as use of videos.

Following is a summary of each of the seven sessions:

i) The mildly intellectually disabled adult

the tutor will:

- become aware of the possible range of lifestyles of mildly intellectually disabled adults from segregated to integrated into general community life.
- investigate potential roles of a tutor in developing literacy/numeracy skills for a mildly intellectually disabled adult.
- match resource materials and tutoring strategies with a 'phantom' student.

ii) Learning behaviour of mildly intellectually disabled adults

the tutor will:

- gain knowledge of the learning characteristics of mildly intellectually disabled adults in relation to their acquisition of literacy/numeracy skills.
- be able to describe the strategies used by a tutor who is upgrading the literacy/numeracy skills of a mildly intellectually disabled adult.
- describe the impact of a tutor on the acquisition of literacy/numeracy skills by a mildly intellectually disabled adult.

iii) Visit to a sheltered workshop

the tutor will:

- be involved in discussions with management, support staff, employees.

iv) Getting reading and writing going

the tutor will:

- recognize the basic literacy skills necessary for independence in everyday living.
- have an understanding of a method used to facilitate the acquisition of basic literacy skills; namely the 'language experience approach'.
- be able to put the language experience approach into practice.

v) Getting maths going

- be able to describe the basic numeracy skills necessary for independence in everyday living.
- given a description of the stages of development of the whole number concept, tutor will relate this development to strategies to be used with their phantom student.
- become aware of the availability and potential use of appropriate resource material.

vi) Getting lessons going

the tutor will:

- apply knowledge gained in sessions iv) and v) to the preparation of a series of tutoring lessons concerned with a specific 'real life' situation, such as finding accommodation, planning a holiday.
- demonstrate the ability to use commercially available resources as well as self-made materials for tutoring lessons in basic literacy and numeracy.

vii) Overview of the role of a tutor

the tutor will:

- be given information about
  - the process and criteria involved in student selection
  - the initial meeting with their student
  - expectations of the first few lessons
  - support networks to tap into as appropriate.
- be able to describe the tasks that could be involved in tutoring a mildly intellectually disabled adult.
- review resources that are available at no cost. A total of 32 individual handout sheets are distributed for tutor reference throughout the training program.

Following is information relating to the backgrounds of the students who have been in the program since its inception in 1980.

Students Involved in the Volunteer Tutor Program for Mildly Intellectually Disabled Adults, 1980–1987

Student Background		1980/81 %	1982 %	1983 %	1984 %	1985 %	1986 %	1987
Sex	Male	57	65	50	50	45	38	47
	Female	43	35	50	50	55	62	53
Age	17–30	78	65	67	75	65	45	42
	31–50	20	22	33	25	30	52	53
	50+	2	13	–	–	5	3	5
Occupation	Open Employment	28	57	–	–	5	9	18
	Sheltered W'shop	61	50	–	46	35	41	35
	Unemployed *	11	23	100	54	60	50	47

(* including Day Activities Centres)

Over the years the trend that has emerged reveals that generally males and females participate on an equal basis; with a tendency for an increase in numbers of students in the 31 to 50 year age group and a corresponding decrease in the 17 to 30 year age group. An overview of their occupational backgrounds indicates, not surprisingly, a low percentage in open employment, whilst the number of students considered unemployed or in sheltered workshops has varied quite markedly over the years.

The majority of students are referred from sheltered workshops and day training centres. The referral system results in reciprocal benefits for both the staff of the referring organisation and the staff at Swinburne. Staff of the referring organisations are most positive about the results of tuition, especially in relation to a student's personal development and confidence, as well as improvement in the students' basic literacy and/or numeracy skills.

INTERACTIVE READING

DON STREMPEL

With this computer program,educators now have a valuable tool for turning any text into a learning program. Reading skills themselves will be developed and reinforced through its use and can be tested. Any prose learning materials or narratives stored in standard ASCII files can be automatically converted into Interactive Reading exercises or tests, and it is considered that learning of the content will be significantly enhanced.

The revised algorithms for automatically producing this "second generation cloze" were first published by Ronald P. Carver (1975).

Carver called the technique "reading input" because the reading materials, now produced by the computer itself, provide a measure of the meaning readers are constructing from what they are reading. Because the reading input (Interactive Reading) procedure involves the reader in continuous comprehension of the materials produced, it enhances the reader's learning of the prose materials with which s/he interacts (Carver, 1975 (a)). In this article Carver also calls the materials generated "programmed prose".

The Interactive Reading Program based on Ronald Carver's algorithm was developed for the author by Mr. John Davy who is both a professional educator, and computer data processing designer and programmer.

AN EXAMPLE OF READING INPUT/PROGRAMMED PROSE/INTERACTIVE READING

B:WRITETRA

Many trade tests are written in a style of language which is unfamiliar to many of the students in TAFE. Apprentices often underachieve in their course because (prose, they, books) have difficulty in understanding the technical prose of the books, worksheets and other written materials that they have to(because, read the).

Many instructional materials are difficult to comprehend because the words used are unnecessarily abstract and the sentence and paragraph structure (they, is, ideas) needlessly complex. Students can cope with new and difficult ideas far more easily if they are presented in simple (straight, presented, difficult) forward language.

In the above example of Interactive Reading text, it is seen that this procedure has word deletions as in cloze passages but the reader is supplied with the correct word mixed with alternatives, as in multiple choice testing.

The Interactive Reading exercise/test is produced from a test file by the supervisor using the "Make Test" routine from the Supervisor Menu.

The student then selects "Do Another Test" from the Student Menu, chooses the exercise/test from a menu and chooses the correct answer to each item outlined in the User Manual for Interactive Reading. Scoring is done by the computer and is entered on a student record which is stored and can be accessed by the student or the supervisor.

The great advantage of Interactive Reading is that all alternatives (distractors) are selected according to supervisor regulated parameters from the actual text which has been typed or copied into Interactive Reading computer text files. Thus the alternatives are always at the same reading level of the text and do not require the difficult, subjective generation of distractors, usually requiring a skilled educator.

The problems associated with cloze answers, especially for automatic computer scoring are also avoided as students are not

dependent on spelling skills, nor is there rejection of what could be legitimate alternatives. These problems have not only made use of standard cloze procedure awkward for teachers, but also tedious and somewhat spelling dependent for students. Nor is there immediate feedback from standard cloze to the student regarding errors.

With Interactive Reading the student will not be hindered by having to construct the response as s/he only has to select the best alternative. If a wrong selection is made the computer will indicate this with a soft noise together with the correct word. By this means errors will not contribute to failure on subsequent items, and indeed valuable correction and learning can immediately take place. Interactive Reading is a faster procedure so students will not forget the context so readily. It is also possible for students to re-do exercises where they or the supervisor judge the initial performance unsatisfactory. Alternative forms can be generated almost without limit from a text file by the computer, and simply named differently for identification.

USE IN T.A.F.E.

The focus of our present discussion is for vocational studies in TAFE courses. The Interactive Reading program may be used in a number of ways.

1. Screening of students

By use of an appropriately selected Interactive Reading exercise, course supervisors will be assisted in their judgement as to whether a student will be able to cope with the reading required in a course.

2. Preparatory or Bridging Courses

Students can use Interactive Reading exercises to improve their reading skills in general and can be introduced to course related learning materials in a novel and instructive way.

3. Use in Technical Courses

3.1 Many or sometimes all textual materials for courses may be turned into Interactive Reading exercises. Students can practice independently to achieve comprehension of the materials. Supervisors may also employ scores at some points in courses to form part of their assessment of students.

3.2 Interactive Reading exercises help to keep attention on material being read so they can facilitate revision and consolidation.

4. Other Uses

4.1 The scores obtained by groups of students using the same text will give an estimate of the level of readability of the course materials and so may help to pinpoint sections of technical texts or notes requiring revision.

4.2 Materials can be printed out to be used by a whole group at once, even though this means foregoing the advantage of computer interaction with its instant feedback of right/wrong and its provision of correct answers when errors occur.

4.3 Student paced learning can be more readily achievable as the students can use the exercises at any time they have access to a computer.

As mentioned, these materials are generated from ASCII files. The Interactive Reading Manual which accompanies the disk mentions a number of suitable word processors. Some of these are Microsoft WORD, PC-Write (public domain), Word Perfect, PFS Write, First Choice or Professional Writer.

Other files such as those of WORDSTAR can be converted by the use of Microsoft WORD EXCHANGE, so there may already be available to you many suitable text files for conversion to Interactive Reading exercises/tests.

It is envisaged that a wide use of these Interactive Reading materials will result in further uses being suggested, and in research which will establish them as

regular effective tools for the improvement of reading comprehension, and for more efficient learning.

(This paper is to accompany a 'hands on' workshop with the Interactive Reading program.)

Note: "Interactive Reading", with manual is available from
Mr. John Davy,
19 Koonya Ave,
SEAFORD, S.A. 5169
for $35.00 (postage and handling included)

A simple wordprocessor is also available to enter text files simply. It is called WRITER and is available for an extra $10.00.

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"HEY MISS, I CAN'T READ THESE NOTES"

SUSAN GREENLAND

INTRODUCTION

It is common for a great many apprentices to experience reading problems during the course of their training. Firstly, and more commonly, the major problem is the amount of concentrated print material which they must cover in a seven week Block Release situation. Secondly, there is a number of students attending apprentice training who lack even the most basic literacy skills and who are inadequately prepared to cope with the demands placed on them in their college studies.

Many technical teachers in TAFE Colleges are critical of the standards of literacy possessed by incoming students; they maintain that standards are lower and are declining further. This premise is arguable as research presented (Education News 1982) points out that statistics collected in Australia since 1946 cannot substantiate a "lowering of standards" claim. It could, however, be said that standards are not improving, even though many of the students are coming to College after completing a number of years in the Secondary system.

Apprentices in training some ten to fifteen years ago underwent a more vigorous practical training; they learnt very much by hands-on experience – College studies were not as theoretically oriented as today. Indeed, the theory component, in terms of hours spent at College, is at least half their day. Apprentices are expected to acquire increasing amounts of theoretical trade-related knowledge. They are expected to acquire that knowledge in ever increasing proportions by reading and comprehending material of the written instructional kind (Mealyea 1982). These instructional materials are made up of technical language which has inherent barriers to apprentices' comprehension.

Often the technical teachers who are responsible for them have received no instruction in the reading process. It would seem that an understanding of the reading process and perhaps, more importantly, the reading-to-learn process, is vital to technical teachers. They can no longer shelve the issue by commenting:

"Technical Colleges are for teaching trade skills not reading and writing."

Most College work nowadays demands an apprentice to be able to read with full comprehension the content of the course – most commonly presented to the apprentice in the form of print which has been composed by the technical teachers themselves. This reliance on print – for – learning or reading is causing the so-called Vocational Literacy problem.

STANDARD OF APPRENTICES ENTERING COLLEGE

Until 1983 Queensland TAFE has tested the Reading Comprehension level of all Stage One apprentices by administering a Gapadol on their first day at College so that current standards of literacy throughout the state could be assessed and recorded. Many officers in TAFE are aware of the growing dependence in Colleges on written language for learning and that the minimum readability level of much College-produced materials is at least Year 10 level. The purpose of testing is also to provide appropriate assistance for any apprentice with problems as soon as possible in their seven week stay.

There is not a great deal of statistical information on levels of apprentice literacy published in Australia or elsewhere; but since 1975 some results are available from TAFE Colleges – Canberra, A.C.T. (House of Representatives Select Committee on Specific Learning Difficulties 1976), Swinburne TAFE, Victoria (Ryan 1976), and Croydon, South Australia (TAFE Clearinghouse Document no TD 314).

The Croyden study has been the most thorough to date. They related the measured literacy level to College course performance – the correlations suggest that literacy plays an important part in determining the students' assessed performances in their course work and hence in their ability to cope with trade courses. It was found that 1/5th of students entering apprentice courses at Croyden were incapable of properly comprehending course texts and indeed the literature of everyday life.

DEMANDS AT COLLEGE

Although many apprentices appear to have very poor reading comprehension skills; in fact the problem is that there is often a complete mis-match between the language of the apprentice and that of the text used. This mis-match is determined by the mean reading difficulty scores of the instructional materials using the SMOG Readability guide.

HONDA manual Automotive apprentice notes Electrical Text	Tertiary
Carpentry and Joinery apprentice notes Business Studies Programme Cookery Text	Year 10/11

An examination of the text material reveals a number of factors that less successful students are faced with. These include a lack of "real world" industrial experience, use of technical terms and jargon, expository prose and technical data, compound and complex sentence structures as well as sentences with a high concept density. All these, combined with a generally poor text layout, frequently contribute to the student's inability to comprehend text. (See Appendix I for Teacher/Student Handouts).

It is necessary to state that an inability to comprehend trade material is not necessarily an inability to articulate the text. Nor, on the other hand, is it lack of intelligence. Many students are able to decode and make all the phonetic connections for the pronunciations of the text vocabulary but when questioned there is little or no comprehension of the text content. The converse is also true, however. Sticht (1972) has been involved in research on functional literacy in America, and has found that many students could make adequate use of print resources even though a comparison of their reading ability and the readability level of the material suggested that the reading level was beyond their capacity. Sticht suggests that this is due to a combination of

a) interest and high motivation
b) highly relevant background experience.

Often apprentices, regardless of educational achievement will struggle to comprehend new knowledge in reading material if he/she has a limited prior knowledge in the area. Mikulecky (1982) in his research suggests that once people enter the workforce they actually use their reading strategies more effectively than when they were at school.

Morris and Cope (1982) who have completed research in Queensland have found that at College apprentices use texts, prepared notes as well as library resources. These materials introduce many apprentices to concepts and problems they have not met and often will not meet in their on-the-job training at their place of employment. Thus, the apprentices' reading-to-learn experiences at College are very demanding in terms of both quantity and conceptual load; and the relatively short time at College does not allow for much indepth study.

I would suggest that mis-match is not the sole reason why apprentices fail their College work; there is also the problem that the levels of literacy for the apprentice at College and on-the-job situations are very much different.

ON-THE-JOB LITERACY

A study by Mikulecky (1982) examined the literacy demands, competencies and strategies present in the daily reading of students and workers in order to determine the extent to which literacy, as is encountered in schools, is a preparation for various occupational literacy demands. He

concludes by saying that what does appear to be clear is that reading for application is a skill that is encountered in a majority of reading tasks on the job but emphasized in only a minority of reading experiences discussed by technical school students.

Susan Turk Heinemann (1979) has made some tentative conclusions about job literacy demands from her current research on Secretaries' Reading and Writing Skills. She suggests that firstly, reading on the job is a ubiquitous activity and may be the most prevalent type of reading done by adults. Secondly, that literacy tasks on the job are completed in an information-rich context. Because most of the tasks involve the application of information to a particular job task, the job task itself provides a number of extra-linguistic cues that may help the reader gain information quickly with a minimum of attention. On-the-job reading also makes use of context and the repetitious nature on the job probably enables many apprentices/workers to read material on the job that they would not be able to read *in* isolation.

Morris and Cope (1982) in discussing on-the-job literacy as it relates specifically to apprentices make the statement that "In general, the apprentice has to face all the literacy demands with which the tradesman has to deal .... and since the beginning apprentice lacks sufficient work experience he/she has to use print resources which the tradesman (and College teachers)† takes for granted."

CONCLUSION

With regard to the whole issue of Vocational Literacy (that is, the average apprentice who has problems with the printed materials he uses at College) the problem as I perceive it, is often not his – rather it lies with the standard of printed materials that the apprentice is expected to learn from. Technical teachers appear to be making some advances in this area, as they become aware that they must take responsibility for teaching the reading of their texts in their trade areas; so that instead of extended prose, few illustrations or explanations, more and more technical teachers are producing texts which are far more readable for the apprentices.

If this trend continues I am sure that Apprentice Literacy as a problem will not appear as severe as the testing programme and staff perceptions make it out to be and the "cop out" that Technical Colleges should only teach trade skills can be dismissed outright.

Apprentice Literacy is a problem of the literacy of the print and not of the Apprentice!!

† The portion in brackets is my inclusion.

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TAFE Clearinghouse Documents

TD314 The Croyden Park College Intervention Programme

TD327 Submission to Standing Committee on Education.

Appendix I

HOW CAN TEXTS BE MADE EASIER TO READ?

1 Use clear headings in the form of questions

2 Use short, simple words

3 Use everyday language to explain the technical words

4 Use clear, appropriate illustrations

5 Use numbered points rather than long sentences in paragraphs

6 Use lots of space

HOW TO READ AND LEARN FROM TECHNICAL PROSE

Ensure:

1. Initial preparation (of the student) before beginning the reading task.

2. You establish what the reader knows already.

3. You provide students with a context.

4. You have a variety of print resources available as reading materials.

5. Students are aware (and know their way around) of the structure of the reading materials.

6. Students are aware of the need to match reading style/rate to suit the materials they are reading.

HANDOUT FOR STUDENTS
(BALD HILLS COLLEGE OF TAFE)

HOW TO READ (and learn from) A TEXTBOOK

1. ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH YOUR TEXTBOOK?

Can you use – the Contents page
– the Index
– the Bibliography
– the Glossary

Are you aware of – the importance of illustrations
– the layout of Headings, sub-headings etc.

2. HAVE YOU SET A GOAL FOR YOUR READING?

Why are you reading – as background for future lessons
– as preparation for a future lesson
– as a review of material read in class in the past
– for notes to be made and memorized

3. HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW OF THE TOPIC?

It often helps to jot down some of your ideas/questions before beginning to read.

4. HOW CAN I EFFECTIVELY READ A CHAPTER IN A TEXTBOOK?

Step 1: SCAN the whole chapter to get a quick overview.

Step 2: SKIM page by page looking at headings, illustrations, diagrams; be sure to read the introduction and conclusion of the chapter.

Step 3: READ the whole chapter in one sitting to get an overall understanding of the topic.

Step 4: ACTIVELY READ (paragraph by paragraph) by using

- # HIGHLIGHT main ideas
- # UNDERLINE and number supporting details
- # SPOT words in the margin

Keep a list of vocabulary/spelling you need to check. Jot down any questions/ambiguities to follow up.

Step 5: NOTE-MAKE (paragraph by paragraph) using

- # HEADINGS
- # NUMBERED POINTS
- # SELECT main ideas and supporting details but USE YOUR OWN WORDS if you can

Step 6: MEMORIZE the material if it needs to be learned

- # SHORT CONCENTRATED bursts of learning with breaks in between are the most effective
- # SAY ALOUD, WRITE OUT – use a combination of as many techniques as you can to memorize

Step 7: REVIEW the material within the following time frame if you wish to store the information in your long term memory

- # IMMEDIATELY after learning
- # 24 HOURS LATER
- # ONE WEEK LATER
- # ONE MONTH LATER

A very successful review technique is to make your own written summary of the material you have learned.

5. DID YOU KNOW?

IT IS THE ABILITY OF A STUDENT TO REFLECT ON WHAT HE/SHE READS WHICH MAKES THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A GOOD READER AND A POOR READER.

ACCELERATIVE LEARNING

DON STREMPEL

This innovative, "applied altered states of consciousness" learning system is being used with a group of partially sighted adults learning spelling. Lozanov, a Bulgarian, has shown increases in learning and retention of 500% or more with his eclectic method culled from eastern and western learning practice. The system involves associative learning, presented in both an active and a passive relaxed state achieved by suggestion and music, and active practice sessions. The system is described in part, and positive recommendations made.

Accelerative Learning, Accelerated Learning, Suggestology, Suggestopedia, Suggested and Accelerative Learning, Supermemory and Superlearning are all terms used to label the learning system, and some derivatives of it, which were synthesised by Georgi Lozanov of Sophia, Bulgaria.

The use of Lozanov's system for factual learning is now spreading through the world after its development in Bulgaria. Georgi Lozanov, a doctor and psychiatrist, realising that usual teaching and learning methods fail to use more than a small part of the human potential, carried out extensive investigations into learning and memory. People with extraordinary mental abilities were studied, some from Soviet and Western countries, and others from the Eastern disciplines such as Yoga. Bulgaria itself has a rich mix of eastern and western psychological practice and Lozanov became sure that much greater learning and memory would take place by using the body, mind and intuition in a more holistic way.

The technique which Lozanov has developed has had many interpretations in the West and it is necessary for anyone interested in pursuing this outstanding method of expanding learning and memory, to read original Lozanov writings and authentic articles from Accelerative Learning Societies.

The method is not static but is being further refined as research is conducted and variations tested. It is necessary to understand the basis of the method to employ it with full success, as was evidenced when the first ideas filtered into America. People tried presenting learning material to a background of music, a part of the technique, which is used at an appropriate time in a lesson, and with recommended presentation technique and music. These early 'experiments' failed and 'superlearning' was at first discredited.

The method involves the use of associative and visualisation technique as known to us but also incorporates relaxation leading to an 'alpha'-like state of consciousness. In this state it is theorised that learning can be effortless through use of the left and right hemispheres of the brain.

Lozanov also includes the power of suggestion and uses active practice, particularly of a relaxed, almost childlike enjoyment when using the knowledge acquired. Music is employed both during initial presentations of material to be learned, and as part of the passive relaxed state of learning section of an accelerative learning session.

Lozanov found that when people were learning, using or recalling at the level he styles 'hypermnesia' (supermemory) they were in a relaxed state, far from the associations we normally have of stressful learning, study and recall. Thus with accelerative learning students need to be confident and relaxed, enjoying learning. This is achieved in part by learners gaining confidence and becoming convinced of their great memory capacity. Students recall in learning sessions, pleasant learning experiences and times that learning was easy and its recall enjoyable and effortless. These experiences are then associated wi[illegible]he new learning to be achieved.

Procedure

For a full practical treatment refer to "S.A.L.T.: Suggestive Accelerative Learning Techniques, Theory and Applications", 1985, by Donald H. Schuster and Charles E. Gritton, and to G. Lozanov, 1978, "Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy".

Outline of procedure used

Preparation

The method is introduced in a confident and credible way. Intending teachers should have no doubts that the method will work. Read sufficient literature from journals to be convinced, such as from the Journal of The Society for Accelerative Learning and Teaching. Lozanov believes that with this method doubts in a presenter will be intuitively recognised as "signals from the second level" unless presenters can be credible, positive and somewhat authoritative. In this initial stage much can be done to break down learning barriers, especially by positive suggestions that learning will be achievable, faster and pleasant. Schuster and Gritton also suggest simple relaxing physical exercises to precede mental relaxation. In the early stages students practise relaxation by following suggestions for complex body and mind relaxation, and learning to achieve an 'alpha' - like mental state. Students are assisted by suggestions, guided imagery where pleasant scenes are mentally experienced, the recall of pleasant learning experiences, and suggestions fostering positive attitudes and goal setting. Relaxing music is introduced and students learn to breathe deeply and rhythmically.

In later presentations this part can be very short as the students will be ready for a positive, pleasant learning experience.

Presentation

The presenter needs to have the learning matter organised so that it is condensed to essentials. In this case spelling was the learning matter and the presenter was ready with the rules and words and associations or gimmicks which were suggested to aid learning.

The approach we used was Morphographic Spelling, SRA, 1976 and the 70 lessons of the first section were covered in eight presentations. With factual matter a logical sequence would help. The matter is discussed and visual imagery constructed, by the learner, for each of the facts (rules) or discrete parts (words and affixes).

At this time a review can be made of previous learning.

Active Concert

The next part is a dramatic presentation aloud of the matter by the teacher to a background of dramatic music. Students elaborate on, recall or imagine associations, thus making them their own ways to remember. This is styled the 'Active Concert'. Rousing music even at this stage can facilitate "whole brain' learning.

The 'Passive Concert'

For this section the student needs to be seated comfortably, or even to be lying down. As the mood changes, here it is useful to use suggestions to achieve bodily relaxation, and guided imagery e.g. imagining a pleasant time on a warm peaceful beach, to gain mental relaxation, reaching an 'alpha' - like state of consciousness. (Alpha waves are the predominant brain waves during relaxation). A background of baroque music is introduced, in our case during the guided imagery section, and then continued throughout the 'Passive Concert'. This music (e.g. Largo, or Bach's "Air on a G string") has a regular beat, which coincides with resting heart rate. The body will 'time' its activity to the music and presenters suggest slow and even breathing.

Most guides to the method suggest that students learn to breathe in for four beats, hold for four beats and breathe out for four beats. During the held breath time the presenter delivers the information, again in discrete segments. Later findings show that this rhythmic breathing can be too stressful to achieve, and that learning will be just as effective without it.

At the end of this presentation the students

are brought out of the relaxed state ready for the final section.

Practice

In this section students can work in pairs or small groups recalling items of the material just presented. We used individual practice here as the partially sighted students needed different machines such as large print typewriters or electronic enlargers in order to see what they wrote. Some practice was done as a group and oral spelling used. One student experienced difficulties here because of a very significant hearing loss.

Word games, recall games and activities are the standard recommendation in the practice session, with as much fun and mirth as can be generated. This open, enjoyable time is a significant part of the method.

Students can be given a test at this time but only so that they can build self-confidence by the evidence of their personal recall. All ideas of competition are excluded and scores only collated as a group average, again for students to be reinforced in their belief in the efficacy of the method.

Results

The students were individuals from the Royal Society for the Blind (S.A.) who had each requested help to overcome spelling problems. Their levels were varied and no pre-test/post-test data was obtained. All students achieved a high standard during their informal tests, with the exception of those with significant hearing loss. One deaf student was assisted by a staff member who signed for him but he soon left the group. Another student with poor hearing persevered through the course, gaining significantly in spelling skill and self confidence.

Three of the students left during the course as they gained employment.

Comments from the remaining students

'Relaxation makes you calm and gives you more confidence.'

'Breaking up words and making them into big words, and talking about the words is interesting.'

'In the past spelling and reading have been so time consuming ... to the point of losing all interest. Now I feel my English has developed immensely. I also feel confident. Relaxation has helped to expand my concentration and make learning enjoyable, rather than a chore!'

'With relaxation my mind has no pressure in working out how to split long words into sections!'

'My spelling has improved approximately 150 percent. I find lessons very relaxing and I look forward to them every week. I see this method of teaching is very appropriate for people who are visually impaired.'

Uses of the method

One of the popular ways of using Accelerative Learning is with the study of foreign languages. Lozanov himself found that "foreign language vocabulary could be learned at a rate of 1.2 words per minute while teaching 1,000 words a day with 95 percent recall the next day" (Schmidt, 19800. In TAFE many of the elements of trade and other courses can be readily presented in discrete items, so the method can be applied quite widely. Ostrander and Schroeder (1979) report that outstanding results have been achieved, such as learning 500 or more new foreign words in one day (p. 35) or a full year's Spanish in ten half days (p. 5). Retention rates are high – 88 percent after 6 months, 57 percent after twenty months with no intervening practice (p. 34). Demoralised by the poor learning of his science classes Charles Gritton gave rapid learning a try. (p. 53) It worked, and in the following year his four classes averaged 97.5 percent. Of course this did wonders for the demoralised teacher as well as for his students!

Other rapid learning successes reported include remedial reading, mathematics, English history, and statistics.

Palmer (1975) reports in her literature review of Suggestive Accelerative Learning and Teaching, consistent advantages of the method with elementary

students, except for one of the studies with intellectually handicapped students.

With regular and gifted students, "Conclusions favored validity of S.A.L.T. procedures in most grades, subjects and ability levels" (p. 102). With older, post-school students classified as Learning Disabled or Remedial, only five studies were reported with two showing no statistically significant results. The comments indicate that greater experience and understanding of S.A.L.T. may become more necessary with older students.

East German Version

In East Germany the presentation of new learning matter is done in a half hour presentation and active practice is left for the next day, or within 48 hours.

The presentation of matter is done as a climax to the activities of a morning.

1. A three or four minute music period commences the session for settling into a receptive frame of mind. No lengthy relaxation time is used.

2. While the students follow from a text or written listing of matter, the presenter reads aloud from the text with differing intonations ('Three level intonation'). The students are seated.

3. The students close their eyes and relax while the teacher repeats the matter to a background of Adagio or Andante pace music, generally from Haydn or Mozart.

4. The students again open their eyes, and follow the text of the next page of learning matter as in 2.

The procedure 2 to 3 is repeated until the end of the half hour session. At the end a short allegro movement, (e.g. Haydn's Trumpet Concerto allegro) is played while they are informed just how many lexical items they have just learned.

Accelerative Learning has the potential for increasing interest in learning, self-confidence and achievement. Where lecturers can envisage conducting presentations in this way it is recommended that they do the necessary reading and preparation before using the method themselves. Such an approach is recommended above following commercial Superlearning approaches.

NOTE:

Further information can be obtained from the Secretary of the Accelerative Learning Society of Australia (ALSA) by writing to

57 Allerton Way,
BOORAGOON, W.A. 6154

A newsletter is published. A subscription to the society costs $15.00 and proceedings of the First ALSA Conference, 1984 are available for $6.00.

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THE LANGUAGE OF MATHEMATICS
ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING ADULT NUMERACY

DAVID TOUT

The Learning of Mathematics

There are various theories on the way children learn mathematics. Major contributors in this area have been Jean Piaget, Jerome Bruner and Zoltan Dienes. Rather than looking at these theories separately, there is one recent theory that seems to cover much of what the others say, but in much simpler terms. Pamela Liebeck is a U.K. Maths Educator (1) and she argues that for a child to attain mathematical understanding and competence she/he needs to progress through this sequence of abstraction:

E – EXPERIENCE with physical objects.

L – spoken LANGUAGE that describes that experience.

P – PICTURES that represent the experience.

S – written SYMBOLS that generalize the experience.

One of the major differences between this theory and others is that it explicitly gives spoken language a place of its own. My experience is that the talking of mathematics is a very important aspect in learning mathematics, but all too often one that is overlooked. A point that Liebeck makes is that unfortunately a maths text book, however good, can only be concerned with the last two items of this sequence.

This theory applies to children. How adults learn needs to be taken into account for the approach to teaching adults basic mathematics. Some of the important assumptions about adult learners (Knowles(2)) are that:

– Adults need independence and self-direction.

– Adults are store houses of experience.

– Adults are ready to learn but their immediate need dominates all else.

– Adults' orientation to learning is here-and-now problem-centred.

Looking at these assumptions, and from my experiences working with many adults learning mathematics from pre-school to year 12 level, I feel that because of an adult's greater experiences and ability to have insights, to visualize and to see relationships not discerned by children, they can often integrate the first three steps of the E-L-P-S sequence. That is, they can often jump quickly from experiences with physical objects to accepting pictures as representing those objects. In fact adults can often skip the hands-on experience and relate directly to pictures.

An example would be in the introduction of the concept of fractions to adults – draw a circle on a piece of paper and say that it is a pizza or a chocolate cake, and immediately most adults will have a picture of that object in their mind. They can then visualize and accept you cutting it up into various sized bits – aided by pictures. Mind you, I would still argue that in the case of fractions the use of hands-on experience of fraction kits is a must for most adults to accept all the operations on fractions.

An important step in the E-L-P-S sequence still exists for adults – that is the second step of spoken language. As part of working with physical objects and/or pictures there must be talking about the experience and the concepts and processes involved. It is here that the importance of mathematical language comes in.

The Language of Mathematics

By analysing student errors it is possible to see how important it is talking maths and coming to terms with the language involved. Too often students come along having learnt an incorrect method (by memory alone), and it is possible to see that they have probably never really understood the process nor accepted the words being used. By getting students to verbalize their thought processes when solving maths problems it is then possible to pick up their misunderstandings and misconceptions.

(A) A simple example would be:

$$\begin{array}{r} 93 \\ -55 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

(I) One common answer to this would be 42. In this case if you ask the student to verbalize what they are doing they will invariably say something like: "Five from three won't go, so three from five is two". This indicates a lack of understanding of the concept of subtraction and of what 'from' means. They are doing a sum by memory alone.

The other important point that very frequently happens with adult numeracy students is that they never attempt to check their answers. They are quite content to simply be able to get a number – they half expect it to be wrong anyway, and numbers mean little to them. They have little ability to estimate. The best way to develop these skills, I feel, is to always relate the sum to a real problem or application. They are then better able to comprehend the process and answer. In this way they can check whether their answer is reasonable.

(II) Another 'error' I have come across in subtraction is made even when the student appears to be getting the answer correct. A student with the correct answer of 38 can verbalize it incorrectly by saying "five take away three won't go so borrow from the nine ..... and then five take away thirteen is eight ....." Such students are again not relating the concept and process to the language being used. What they are saying is nonsense but they can get the sums correct!

This particular case can also be related to the fact that the common use of 'from' requires the student to work from the second number then back to the first: "five from three." This needs to be compared to the other common terms used – take away, minus and subtract. These all require working from the first number to the second: "three take away five" or "three minus five" etc. What happens when an unsure student suddenly moves from one teacher who used "from" to one who uses "minus"?

(III) By looking at just some of the words used for this one operation of subtraction it can be seen how complicated the language can be. Mentioned so far have been – from, minus, take away, and subtract. But what about – difference, less, reduce, remove, decrease, discount, take off, and further phrases that mean you need to perform the operation of subtraction. If you look at all the words and phrases that are used for the four main operations then it is easy to see how complicated it is to do problem solving and interpretation of real life situations. Many terms will overlap between different operations – for example, the phrase "how many" is often used to indicate a division as in "how many fives in 25?" But what about "how many are there between 5 and 25?" or "how many are there in five 25's?" or "how many is 5 and 25" "How many" can easily be used for any operation, but many students know it as division. So much for maths being exact and well defined.

Further analysis and diagnosis of student errors leads to more examples of difficulties and misconceptions associated with the language of mathematics.

(B) Another important point related to the language of maths is the confusion between the maths usage of words compared to their everyday usage. There are many good examples of student confusion about the meaning and usage of words in the U.K. study "Children's Understanding of Mathematics: 1-13" (3). One student when

interviewed about volume responded:

Interviewer: "Do you know what volume means?"
Child: "Yes"
I: "Could you explain to me what it means?"
C: Yes, it's what is on the knob on the TV set."

Maths words can fall into three categories (Munro (4)):

(I) Words that maintain the same meaning in both maths usage and in everyday usage: e.g. add, take away.

(II) Words that only have a mathematical usage and do not get used in everyday contexts: e.g. numerator, quotient, isosceles, binomial, equilateral.

(III) Words that have different meanings in their maths usage and their everyday usage. Often their meanings can be related in some way, but the maths usage is very precise. e.g. volume, odd, even, square, negative, positive, factor, multiple, divide, reciprocal, cancel, discrete.

Unfortunately most maths words fall into the latter two categories. The second category often involves complicated, sophisticated words whilst the third category can cause confusion between their different meanings and usage. Many adult numeracy/basic maths students have never come to terms with the meanings and concepts associated with maths language and/or have never been able to sort out the different meanings related to the same word. Of course these issues will be even more important to students with reading problems. Talking maths and sharing words and meanings with other students and the teacher is the best way to overcome these difficulties. Teachers of maths need to be aware of the difficulties in comprehending maths vocabulary, and be careful to explain and discuss the usage and meaning of words and terms they introduce and use.

(C) A related problem in the teaching of mathematics is that the language usually used in text books (and by most teachers?) is formal and sophisticated – mainly types (ii) and (iii) above. This may be because maths text book writers and teachers feel this is the precise way to explain things mathematically. However the majority of students do not relate to, or understand, it readily. Students need to translate the maths language into their own meanings and understanding – and often a simpler, everyday explanation will be more easily comprehended. Here is a typical example from a text book – and it is a book written explicitly for those students who have not coped well with formal school maths (5):

"When multiplying any number by a power of ten move the decimal point 1 place to the right for each zero". Why use the expression "power of ten"?

Another example from a popular Year 8 text book (6):

"The lowest common denominator (L.C.D.) is the denominator which contains a representative of factors of each of the denominators. To include all factors take the highest power of each different prime factor present."

Analysis of other text books will indicate similar patterns. Again this indicates the need for both students and teachers to discuss, talk and co-operate in the learning of mathematics.

Conclusion

From this analysis of the learning of maths, adult learning and the language of mathematics, I believe it is important to teach adults basic mathematics by:

(I) Emphasising language – its use and meaning

Students need to understand the language used to explain any ideas, concepts, terminology, etc. The only way to determine whether students have this understanding is to get them to verbalize their work. Analysing their errors with them is also a very powerful tool. Getting students to work co-operatively together

will encourage discussion, and hence help students learn and understand maths from each other.

As the U.K. researchers concluded (7): "Perhaps we should get away from 'I'll show you' and into 'let us discuss what this means'. Where possible the maths language should be simplified or at least explained in more everyday terms. Spend time discussing the words used. Students are often fascinated by the relationships between the maths applications of words compared to their normal usage.

(ii) Teaching by understanding, not by rote

The student needs to progress through the E.L.P.S. sequence (even if the adult can combine the E., L. and P. stages) in order to achieve understanding and competence in a maths skill. Often learning mathematics by memory alone was the unsuccessful approach used by these adults when they were at school – this is possibly one reason why they are now returning for help. Teaching by understanding will give better, more effective learning and it aids solving applications in new situations. Again the U.K. study stated (8): "The teaching of algorithms when the child does not understand may be positively harmful in that what the child sees the teacher doing is 'magic' and entirely divorced from problem solving". Besides, most adults will ask "WHY?" and not feel happy about accepting any new knowledge until they have understood.

(iii) Building upon the student's knowledge and experience

The adult student needs to be involved in deciding where she/he is going and what she/he doing in mathematics. Problems need to be related where possible to the interests and experiences of the student. In this way the student can see the maths being applied in areas that she/he understands. Also if students can learn to verbalize and discuss their maths then the teacher can learn and accept the methods, language and understanding of the students, hence building on the skills that already exist.

(iv) Using concrete and/or real materials

Using a functional approach and teaching with concrete materials and/or real applications, caters for the needs of progressing through the E-L-P-S sequence as well as the needs of the adult learner. Relevant and everyday applications will aid understanding, and retain interest and motivation. Students will be able to see the use of maths and be able to interpret and apply their maths skills more widely. Maths will make more sense to them, and the maths language introduced can be assimilated with everyday usage.

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CURRICULUM PROCESSES FOR ADULT MIGRANT LITERACY MATERIALS

Jill Burton

In this paper, I will describe how issues of curriculum content and sequencing for two kinds of literacy learners were addressed as part of a national project on curriculum (the NCP) in the Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP).

The NCP and Adult Migrant Literacy Learners

Following the Committee of Review of the AMEP's report, published in 1986, a number of recommendations concerning curriculum were enacted. Although the resulting task force (the NCP) is co-ordinated nationally by the NCRC, the process of its operation was envisaged right from the start as a consultative one—one in which teachers are encouraged to take part and express their needs. The aims of the NCP now underway in the AMEP are to clarify the AMEP curriculum process in the light of communicative language teaching theory and to produce curriculum documents and resources for teachers implementing a learner-centred, needs-based curriculum for adult ESL learners. The action-plan for this Project is given in *Figure 1*.

Discussion documents containing a brief explanation of the Project's background and the first statement for AMEP teachers of the principles underlying the NCP were prepared early in 1987.

The main body of the document comprised sections on

- goals and learner purposes;
- objectives (teaching, learning, performance, etc.);
- activity and task types;
- content considerations;
- teaching sequences;
- learning strategies;
- assessment and evaluation tools and techniques.

No section was definitive. In the case of some—for example, goals—there was a short discussion statement of the topic and some relevant samples. On the other hand, the section on teaching sequences comprised sample sequences from recognized course texts. The sections on objectives, activity types and task types were the most comprehensive, because teachers' need for support is greatest in these areas—perhaps owing to the amount of continuing discussion on them in ESL specialist fields. Sections generally offered practising teachers some suggestions and discussion concerning major professional skill areas and invited AMEP teachers to comment and/or contribute resources. The samples included were all taken from

NCP Action Plan

STAGE 1

Theoretical input and resources (NCP)
|
Discussion (NCP–AMESs)
|
Programme planning input and practical needs (AMESs)

STAGE 2

Identification of curriculum documentation projects (NCP–AMESs)
|
Documenting typical curriculum practice (AMESs)

STAGE 3

Rough analysis of curriculum data (AMES staff seconded to NCP)
|
Preparation of 11 curriculum frameworks (AMES staff seconded to NCP)

STAGE 4

Pre-trialling (AMES reviewers) *We are here!*
|
Real-time trialling (AMES–NCP)

STAGE 5

Revision of content
Layout and presentation decisions
Production
Planning for implementation
Planning & developing support teacher education resources

ON-GOING USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Figure 1

popular commercial texts or from AMEP-produced materials, with a view to demonstrating that curriculum renewal does not depend on starting from scratch but on consolidating and building on existing sound processes and products.

In addition, the document quoted adult learning principles, from Brundage and MacKeracher (1980: 21–31), which have had a significant impact on AMEP philosophy, and contained an appendix, a paper by Nunan, which provided a practical framework for learner-centred curriculum development.

This document, in a later expanded version, formed the basis for discussions which were held during Stage 1 in all states and territories prior to the start of Stage 2 of the NCP in the second half of 1987.

Meetings were held across the Australian AMEP to explain the aims and organization of the NCP and to invite teachers to document curriculum activity as they practise it. Teachers were told they would be given extra time to carry out the documentation. During the meetings teachers had the opportunity to discuss which learning activities would be suitable to document and how to go about it. The meetings which were held in each state Adult Migrant Education Service (AMES) varied according to each state's requirements and preferences.

The day-long sessions in most locations, however, covered three phases. The first, a workshop, considered teachers' perceptions of the crucial tasks for the NCP, and aimed to sensitize everyone present to the aims of the Project. The second part was the formal presentation, which involved outlining first the five stages of the NCP (see *Figure 1*). The main business of the presentation, though, was discussion of NCP, Stage 2.

Participants in these meetings were told that there would be some national funding available from the Project for curriculum documentation. Teachers could opt to describe either a curriculum process over a period of time or a particular aspect of the curriculum. In the case of the latter, a project might focus on only one stage of a learning arrangement (e.g. pre-course needs analysis), or it might chart one aspect of the curriculum throughout a learning arrangement or centre (e.g. negotiation of learning content for several groups of learners in one centre over ten weeks). The national funding for curriculum documentation was to be arranged as a percentage—ten per cent—of the teaching hours for any learning arrangement, or group of learning arrangements, documented. Thus, a teacher documenting a course of 100 teaching hours would have the equivalent of an extra ten teaching hours for documentation, whereas teachers documenting a regional centre in which the teaching hours might total 500 over ten weeks would have the equivalent of fifty extra teaching hours.

The funding planned for each project was small for two reasons. The factual data, which it was hoped would be collected, was expected to be a relatively straightforward matter of recording routine activity and/or assembling existing materials. Teachers who wanted to take part in Stage 2 were asked to provide information on what they do—what they would do whether they contributed to the Project or not. Furthermore, this low-level funding enabled the Project funding to be spread more widely.

100 studies documenting curriculum practices have been conducted across Australia as part of Stage 2 of the NCP. These include documentation of learning arrangements for a regional AMES centre over a twenty-week period; how one teacher has dealt with mixed language levels with one group over a twelve-month period; how two teachers have negotiated learning arrangements and organized formative evaluation with a group of low-level, elderly Asian students over a semester; and so on.

Although it would have been desirable to have all teachers record what they do in the same format and use terms in the same way, this did not prove possible for several reasons. The documentation was trying to capture an extensive range of curriculum activity, which would have been impossible if teachers were required to constrain their description within a limited framework. Moreover, there is no common agreement yet within the AMEP on what kind of

framework and which descriptive terms would capture this range of professional activity. A curriculum framework and common agreement on definitions of basic terms were anticipated outcomes of the Project. We were optimistic then! Giving teachers the opportunity to describe what they do in their terms will assist these aims. The description provided, for example, demonstrates to teachers curriculum areas needing tighter definition and further resources—which teachers now recognize they need.

Following receipt of the data, two AMEP teachers, from South Australia, were seconded for a month to rough-sort the data and enter them on a computer database for the rest of the NCP team to access and use as a basis for Stage 3 of the Project. During stage 3, teachers from AMESs in NSW, Victoria, NT, WA and SA were seconded to the NCP to develop curriculum frameworks, which comprise syllabus checklists, suggested materials and tasks, assessment and evaluation procedures, discussion of teaching approach and teacher education activities and resources. The curriculum frameworks will work, we hope, on two levels. For teachers new to particular learner groups, they should provide sufficient guidance for them to design and implement a course, and for more experienced teachers and for teacher educators there will be sufficient resources to extend teachers' knowledge and skill. The teacher education questions are vital to the incorporation of the frameworks into professional development programmes.

During February and March, the seconded teachers wrote curriculum frameworks for targeted learner groups, who are considered typical AMEP learner groups. In some cases, the wealth of Stage 2 data on a learner group reflected this; sometimes it did not. (One of the reasons the Stage 2 data did not reflect the AMEP learner profile is that there was no attempt to ensure that they did—that is, teachers chose whether or not to participate in the documentation.) See *Figure 2* for the learner groups covered by the frameworks to date.

Level	Class type
0–1-	Learners from an Indo-Chinese background
0–1-	Slow, elderly learners with reading and writing problems
0–1-	Young, fast learners seeking survival English on arrival in Australia
1—1+	Young, fast learners with interrupted schooling
1—1+	General, social interaction focus
1– 2	Job-seeking focus
1+	Media focus
1+—2	Education (study skills) focus
1+—2	Reading and writing focus for long-term residents
1+—2	Linked skills
1+—2	ESP for engineers

Note: Levels are given according to the ASLPR

Figure 2

I want now to talk to you about two of the eleven frameworks.

Framework 2
This concerns slow, elderly, illiterate learners with ASLPRs of 0–1-. Courses developed for these learners from this framework would be expected to have an aural-oral focus. These learners' pace of learning is slow due to some of the following student factors:

- age (over 50 years)
- poor health including impairments to eyesight, hearing, etc.
- poor educational background
- lack of learning strategies
- poor motivation due to unfamiliarity with educational settings
- illiteracy in L1
- unfamiliarity with Roman script
- emotional trauma associated with being a refugee (p.4)

The author (Stephanie Reid) lists the goals of courses for such learners under two headings: *Setting the scene for language acquisition* (which concentrates on showing students that they are capable of learning English); and *Specific language goals* (focusing on the development of receptive fluency in English).

The next section deals with the teaching approach, which is based on language development emanating from the students' learning experiences with the teacher. Thus, the teacher's role is one of reading students' responses and responding creatively to them, so that teacher and students are engaged in meaningful interaction. Though the course is organized around five basic, predictable themes, how the themes are interwoven rather than treated exclusively is what makes the teacher–student interaction genuine and responsive to need.

Section six contains the syllabus checklists: these are organized as themes, notions, functions, core vocabulary, grammar and communicative skills. The next—extremely important—section considers 'putting it all together in a theme-based course', and section eight concerns assessment and evaluation processes.

Section nine deals with learning tasks appropriate to this learner group. After listing them, the author gives a lesson transcript which shows how some of them can be interwoven into a lesson which develops from teacher–student interaction. The remainder of this section is devoted to suggesting activities which teachers can introduce for the essential learning tasks listed. Users of the framework will find this section equally as important as section seven, which described course content sequencing (as mentioned above).

Section ten maps out course planning stages (overall plan, before the week begins, daily plan, thinking on your feet, record of each lesson after it is done.

The framework finishes with planning strategies, overall course evaluation notes and a glossary of the key concepts underpinning the framework.

Framework 10

This framework (by Sue Hood) is for long-term residents who are orally fluent (ASLPR 1+–2), but whose reading and writing skills are beginner-level. It covers a similar group to that described in the Moraro and McIntyre handbook (1988). The group characteristics section gives in detail the varied range of needs these learners are likely to express. The primary goal of syllabuses developed from this framework is to enable students to have greater access to employment, educational and social opportunities, and more control over their interactions in these fields, more independence and more sense of self-worth.

The teaching approach reflects similar intentions to those of framework 2: namely the teacher must respond to students' needs and interests, and course content must be meaningful and contextualized. This statement is followed by statements on the author's understanding of reading and writing processes and the skills involved.

The needs analysis process is thoroughly dealt with in section six. (Of course, with students with this level of oral–aural proficiency, the process is one which the teacher can handle herself in the classroom.)

The syllabus-planning checklists comprise topics, types of text, skills and strategies, learning skills, linguistic features and activities. Some very useful examples of activity types follow; they are extracted from the author's own published material, from other NCRC publications, and from books well-known in the ESL field (e.g. Bell and Burnaby 1984).

Section eight concerns how the different syllabus components could be put together to form coherent courses for this learner group. A teacher might start from selecting topics or tasks, identifying text-types or skills, or itemizing linguistic features. Each starting-point, or unit of organization will generate course units of different duration. The diagrams and samples are

extremely useful, both for inexperienced teachers and for teachers seeking new approaches. Assessment and evaluation are treated in terms of what learners can do; sample tasks for assessment are included. The framework ends with a list of useful support resources.

Summary
Both frameworks exemplify one of the main aims of the NCP, which is to provide a set of professional development resources for both relatively inexperienced teachers and teachers seeking further development through independent use of support resources. The final section highlights discussion points which were common to the development of all eleven frameworks.

Writing the frameworks: considerations

Several issues were debated long and hard by the writers. The following discussion represents the eventual decisions—though not necessarily agreement—that were reached.

What is a curriculum framework?
How does a framework differ from a coursebook or a syllabus? The frameworks are designed to put some structure and coherence on the learning arrangements which are negotiated between each teacher and their learners. They are meant to exemplify a number of approaches to curriculum planning and how a course, and its content, can be designed to be consistent with explicit planning statements on curriculum and teaching principles. They are not prescriptive, because they are intended as teacher development resources as well as curriculum resources: teachers are encouraged to question statements and activities throughout the frameworks. They are descriptive in that each specifically relates to an identified learner group. It is entirely possible that the planning and teaching approach taken for one learner group could be applied to other identified learner groups. This potential is exploited in the teacher development aspects. They are different from coursebooks, in that they leave course sequencing and content selection to the teacher (who can order and choose from the syllabus checklists provided), and they concentrate on teacher development in curriculum planning and course design skills. From the above, it should be clear that they are intended also to be more than syllabuses. It would, however, be possible to use the frameworks as bases for coursebooks and/or syllabuses.

How wide or narrow should the focus of each framework be?
The writers were conscious of the arbitrariness of identifying eleven typical learner groups for a large, national programme. How useful, for example, is it to prepare a curriculum framework for a group of women students seeking to enrol in a TAFE sewing class, or for East European engineers wanting to join the professional workforce? In the event, we decided that the very particularity of each framework would give teachers something concrete to assess. After all, the frameworks were not meant to be prescriptive, and teachers should be encouraged to build on any resources provided. The most important thing of all was to encourage teachers to articulate their planning principles and assess their content sequencing and selection and teaching approaches continually for consistency with their planning principles.

How important, and how possible, is agreement on use of terminology?
Continuing discussions occurred on the meaning of *task* and its distinction from *activity*, on *skill*, and even on *topic* versus *theme*. We were all agreed that agreement was desirable, but none of us could agree on a definition for any one term. What mattered more in the long-run was that the use of each term was consistent with its definition in each framework. Maybe it was important to demonstrate the extent of disarray—a reason for teachers finding it so difficult to make themselves understood amongst themselves about what they are doing. Maybe the use of the frameworks will indicate useful steps to take for their further definition. Arbitrarily pinning definitions to terms across the frameworks—all of which had been developed with a free hand according to the principles of the designer—would have obscured rather than clarified what is still a major research concern. Each framework will carry its own glossary of curriculum terms. An accompanying document discussing the various issues at stake in the clarification of curriculum terms, however, is essential, and this will be prepared following the trialling of the frameworks.

Trialling and Revision of Frameworks

The trialling of the frameworks is occurring in several phases. The frameworks first received restricted circulation, amongst PDSC (the national Professional Development Sub-Committee) members and a few nominated and experienced teachers in each state, who were asked to decide whether the frameworks are sufficiently developed to merit full trialling. Basically, we were checking for inconsistencies between stated principles and actual course design and content. Four frameworks were selected for immediate trialling and further development (including Sue Hood's for long-term residents whose literacy skills are lower than their oracy skills). The other frameworks will be reconsidered and reworked as necessary in 1989.

Those frameworks to be 'dealt with' this year will be trialled in real-time. Teachers will be funded to work through a framework with a suitable learner group and provide detailed comment on its usefulness, need for revision, helpfulness of layout, etc. These teachers will be assisted by local curriculum personnel, and the ensuing discussions and decision-making could, if properly handled, form a valuable source of professional development.

For these frameworks, we hope to have this development finished by the end of 1988. After this we will prepare these frameworks for glossier and wider production.

Generally, particular care will be paid to creating resources which teachers can add to and which are easy to use. Further, accompanying teacher development resources will also be tackled at this point as will the accompanying discussion document. In addition to analysing the differing definitions given to common curriculum terms in each framework, it will comment upon the individual approaches to curriculum design and responses to specific learner groups.

Conclusion

In this paper I have tried to bring you up to date with a number of developments in the AMEP to support the Adult Migrant Literacy (AML) area. The underlying intention of all the resources and projects described has been to support teachers who essentially work alone in one of the most demanding sections of the AMEP. It is hoped that these resources, and others yet to be developed, will truly help the AMEP literacy teacher to be resourceful in the dual senses of being resource-full and independent, since past experience suggests that the AML learner cannot expect adequate political support and resourcing.

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DOING CASE STUDY RESEARCH

AUDREY N. GRANT
AILEEN TRELOAR

Introductory note: This workshop was intended for participants interested in carrying out descriptive case study research in Adult Literacy. It aimed to be both informative and practical, and to address the main questions the participants had. We used a segment from an ABC video taped interview with an adult literacy student, some extracts from Audrey's interview with the same student and overhead transparencies. Our experiences from working together on the research project team for the Commonwealth commissioned study **Opportunity to do Brilliantly**, also provided illustrations for some of the points summarised below. Rather than include specific research illustrations in the Notes, we would refer readers to the various publications listed in the references.

This paper is presented in two formats: Notes and Reflections. The Notes are Audrey's, and outline briefly material prepared for and covered in the workshop. The Reflections are Aileen's – written as a preparatory paper for the workshop and echoed in some of the illustrations she gave during the session.

NOTES ON DOING CASE STUDY RESEARCH Audrey Grant

There are many ways of approaching and characterising qualitative research. See for instance Jacobs (1988) regarding different research traditions or Diesing (1971) for detailed consideration of both qualitative research approaches. Schon (1983) focusses on professionals as reflective practitioners and Goswami and Stillman's (1987) book focusses on teacher-research as an agency for change. We will limit our focus to the kind of interview, case study based research most likely to interest adult literacy practitioner-researchers e.g. to document good practice, to describe students and/or literacy workers as learners, or to evaluate a literacy program.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF HOLISTIC CASE STUDY RESEARCH

1. Researching – is a process

We can begin by noting that the process of doing case study research is closely akin to the processes we associate with literacy, in that:

(a) researching is like thinking reflexively, reading and writing, speaking and listening, learning and teaching. These processes are involved in research and are often used as metaphors or analogies for the research process.

(b) all of these are interactive, transactive and social processes. They involve encounters between two parties or entities (as for example between reader/text, speaker/listener, researcher/practitioner, observer/observed, self/other) and in the process something new is created. (See Rosenblatt, 1983).

(c) all are esentially constructive and interpretive activities. That is our 'coming to know' is personal and subjective. It is relative to 'who knows what how'. Part of that 'how' is the contextual- that is our learning to mean or our coming to know is embedded in social and cultural contexts. It is patterned and shaped as shared social practices. (See the work of three psychologists- Kelly, 1963, Salmon, 1980 and Vygotsky, 1972 and 1978 for ways of relating the individually and socially constructed nature of human learning, and in the area of literacy learning see Heath, 1983, and Street, 1984).

As these comments imply, underlying case study research is a set of beliefs, values and propositions about human beings, knowledge, social interactions, contexts and practices. The concept of an alternative paradigm or worldview is often developed, demonstrating how

fundamentally different holistic case study research is from the premises of behaviorist psychology and positivism. (See Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Following Diesing (1971) and Geertz (1973) I want to outline further significant characteristics of the holistic standpoint or paradigm which informs the kind of case study research I find most pertinent to adult literacy research.

2. Respect for human beings

This respect should be implicit throughout the case study approach. At one level it is apparent in the respect for confidentiality and privacy. Broadly, it entails a respect for the complexity of human beings, including the recognition of the importance of tacit knowledge, personal constructs, intentions, purposes, and contexts. (Hence the reduction of a person to a set of variables as in traditional quantitative, empirical research design is deemed as disrespectful). Human behaviour is understood to signify: actions are deemed symbolic, and therefore attention is given to 'what is getting said'. The researcher thus aims for 'thick' not 'thin description' of behaviour, events and settings.

3. Understanding the "whole human system in its natural setting"

According to Diesing (1971) "the holist standpoint includes the belief that human systems tend to develop a characteristic wholeness or integrity. They ... have a unity that manifests itself in nearly every part". This places the onus on the researcher to study the relation between the 'parts' in location to their 'whole', as well as the whole in its actual context. The diverse or component parts are neither random nor arbitrary, but are "largely determined by" or only understandable in relation to the whole. The 'whole living system' may be a person, a pair, a family or social unit such as a literacy class or a classroom, an institution such as a school or a community, a city, a society or a culture. The assertion that the whole must be studied in its natural setting is acknowledgement that all subjects or wholes "take their meaning as much from their contexts as they do from themselves" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Shirley Brice Heath's (1983) ten year study of language, life, and work in three communities and in mainstream school classrooms is an outstanding example of an holistic approach to research and of the ways individuals, families, communities and institutions take their meanings from their cultural contexts.

4. "The primacy of subject matter over method"

Allied to the above beliefs is the priority holists give to the subject matter over methods or research techniques that may distort the subject matter and processes being studied. The only adequate method for studying human systems in all their complexity is the human observer, the human as the research instrument.

5. Doing ethnography – writing 'thick description'

The anthropologist, Clifford Geertz (1973), makes two valuable definitions in an introductory chapter. He takes culture to be made up of the "webs of significance" human beings have spun and thus the task of cultural analysis to be an interpretive one – in search of meaning. He defines the work of interpretive anthropologists or ethnographers in terms of what they do, "doing ethnography is" – "an elaborate venture in ... 'thick description' ... Doing ethnography is like trying to read (in the sense of construct a reading of) a manuscript ... written ... in transcient examples of shaped behaviour". This serves to clarify that what we call "our data", such as our interview transcripts with literacy students become "our constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to". Our case studies of students will be actor-oriented descriptions "cast in terms of the constructions we imagine [them] to place upon what they live through". Inevitably the descriptions are our constructions and in that sense "fictions", i.e. "something made ... something fashioned", imaginative, but not false or unfactual. [illegible]n as researchers we

view the interpretive and imaginative process of researching reflexively in this way we are able to enhance the quality of the work. We become better *listeners*, readers and writers, and more aware of the assumptions that we bring.

It is interesting to note in passing that the same kinds of holistic theories underly some of the recent major paradigm shifts in literacy criticism (e.g. with reader response theory) and in the sciences.

PLANNING AND INTERVIEWING

1. Clarifying purposes

Clarify your purposes in doing the research and find out as much as you can about the proposed subject before starting the field work. This will assist you in sharpening your focus; articulating your assumptions, expectations or hyphotheses; determining the best ways to proceed; and yet also allowing for an emergent design. You cannot foresee your 'findings' unless you pre-empt and invalidate them by a narrow design. Hence it is crucial to cast your net wide for data gathering and to use sensitive and open ended approaches.

2. Sampling

A purposive or judgment sample is usually used for case studies, rather than a random sample.

Unless your resources are very substantial it is wise to work with a small number of cases. In order to study in depth the parts in relation to the whole and in social and cultural contexts, as discussed already, we need to maximise the amount of detailed observations and representative information within, rather than across cases.

The judgment criteria for selecting an interview sample will depend on your purposes. Suppose you want to evaluate how a particular literacy program is going. You would have to decide the range of participant perspectives to be representative, and presumably include in the sample, some of each participant group e.g. co-ordinator/tutor/student. The purpose of the research enables you to judge whether the sample should comprise cases which appear typical or extreme, representative of a wide range of diversities or apparently similar, politically pertinent e.g. integration cases, and so on.

3. Using different kinds of evidence

Your data gathering should enable crosschecking and meet the demands of contextual validity. Triangulation of data is a term used to denote the importance of having more than one source of information to establish validity. Sources additional to a single interview might be more than one interview transcript, different participant interviews, other kinds of observations e.g. field notes or video tapes of class reading and writing interactions, samples of student writing and class texts, formal records e.g. policy documents, minutes of meetings, other indicators of attitudes to literacy or proficiency in reading e.g. miscue analysis and retelling procedures.

4. Preparing for an open-ended, structured interview

a) The aim is to gain as full a sense as you can of that student as a person, e.g. his or her interests, aspirations, school experiences, experience of family – place in family vis a vis siblings, child/parent relationships, post school experiences – work, friendships, marriage, parenting etc. All these topic areas provide a personal and social context for understanding the more specifically literacy related attitudes, experiences and behaviours e.g. how and what this person thinks and feels about reading and writing at school and home, in tuition classes and in everyday situations, what myths about literacy learning or about oneself as a reader and writer are believed (Grant, 1986), etc.

b) These may suggest some of the topic areas that can be worked to ensure that your interview questions cover sufficient ground and depth. Drafting the interview questions under the topic areas you settle for takes a lot of careful thought and hard

and flexible planning. It is best if you can think through in advance lots of alternative ways of asking about the same topics and issues, vary the format and specificity of the questions, order them appropriately, build in prompts, ways of asking for elaboration or concrete examples or of signalling a change of topic area etc.

c) Try to envisage the interview setting and your interviewee's likely perception of the interview. How can you defuse the situation of any notion of testing for right or wrong answers? How can you set the interviewee and yourself at ease? How will you explain the purpose of your research in a way that genuinely informs the participant(s) but does not pre-empt the responses? What guarantees of confidentiality and negotiated outcomes will you give?

5. Interviewing

a) I regard it as essential in my research to tape record in full an interview. This has to be negotiated, explained and prepared for, to avoid hitches and distractions. My rationale for tape recording is straightforward: it is my only reliable record of the data, the only way I can hope to record the interviewee's words and my own as interviewer and to return on subsequent occasions to what was actually said in the interview transaction (as distinct from what I might think, recall or attend to at the time as being what the speaker(s) were saying or intending). When I have explained – that I am interested in what is actually said rather than in trusting my ability to recall accurately what has been – I have never had a person decline to be recorded. I always give the option at the outset for the recorder to be switched off at any time, and that option is rarely taken up.

b) There are a number of useful references on preparing interview questions and interviewing, e.g. Spradley (1979). Suffice it to add here that during the interview your aim should be to establish rapport and to take seriously the individual's own experience, how it feels to him/her, what he/she thinks about and how he/she evaluates things. Thorough preparation including a trial run of the interview with someone else, flexibility and active listening during the interview itself will enable you to follow up these concerns and to focus on the interviewee's perspective through sensitive questioning, pausing and prompting. Usually we have to learn to listen actively, to pause for responses and to tolerate thoughtful silences.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

It is always valuable to make journal style observation notes as soon as possible of anything you've noticed during the interview session that may assist you in reconstructing and analysing the situation. The interview should be fully transcribed as soon as possible and proofed to ensure an accurate transcript. That becomes your data text.

1. The first stage of analysis of the data has been aptly described as "listening with the third ear ... a process of waiting to be impressed by recurrent themes that appear in various contexts" (Diesing, 1971). Reading, rereading and pondering the transcripts, I try as it were to 'get behind the minds' of the interviewees; to discern as far as possible their own constructions of meaning- (concepts, categories, ways of thinking, interpreting experiences, taking meaning, evaluating etc.)- by attending closely to what they said and also to the identity of the speaker- the 'who' who is saying, seeing, constructing these meanings in these ways.

2. Overall, the task of immersing yourself in and analysing the transcript involves a process of listening and attending to language, identifying recurrent patterns and themes, discovering interrelationships between the parts in location to the whole, and testing and refining plausible interpretations until they 'fit' the whole. This approach may be seen as analogous to the close reading of a literacy text, involving an analysis of the meanings and ideologies embod[illegible] in the author's or text's language. [illegible]search or as literary

criticism, our reading of the text is potentially subjective and problematic, as ethnographers, reader response and deconstructive critics are quick to alert us to (Geertz, 1973, Thomson, 1987, Gilbert in Corcoran and Evans, 1987).

3. It can assist to limit the analysis to manageable stages if we close circles temporarily, e.g. to consider together all the interviewee's references to primary school, or to siblings and parents. Or again extending the analogy to studying a novel- we can separate out and trace through the meanings embodied in the author's or teller's recurrent themes and preoccupations, dominant metaphors and images as well as in the characteristic settings or contexts, events, actions, narratives and cast of characters that make up an individual's sense of what life is like (Grant, in press). As Geertz (1973) sums it up "Analysis, then, is sorting out the structures of signification ... and determining their social ground and import".

4. A good 'critical interpretation' or tenable reading of the whole will be one which has taken into account every aspect of the data. As in a jigsaw puzzle we may select certain areas for highly focussed attention, ignoring some parts temporarily, as we foreground others, but in the last analysis every piece- every remark made, experience recalled etc.- contributes in terms of its location *with* the whole. At the same time a plausible reading will capture the holistic quality, "the unique characteristics, the distinctive qualities and patterns that differentiate this system from others" (Diesing, 1971). Or as Geertz (1973) says "a good interpretation of anything- a poem, a person, a history, a ritual, an institution, a society – takes us into the heart of that of which it is an interpretation".

CHARACTERISTICS OF HOLISTIC THICK DESCRIPTION

1. It is microscopic and detailed, abounding in "specificness", "circumstantiality" and "sensible actuality".

2. It is tentative and incomplete, leading to the refinement of debate and to agreement or conclusive proof.

3. It is accountable to the demands of contextual validity or dependability. These are met through a painstaking and rigorous use of various kinds of evidence, crosschecks, triangulation, representative participant perspectives and contexts etc.

4. It enables generalisation within cases and the development of an interpretive or 'grounded theory', which is "unseverable from the immediacies thick description presents". It yields "local knowledge", Geertz (1973, 1983).

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REFLECTIONS ON PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH Aileen Treloar

My experience as a member of the research team for "Opportunity to do Brilliantly" was a turning point for me as a literacy worker. It was a demanding education that no tertiary training has equalled. I found it a privilege to be stretched in this way, to have to grapple with the practical implications of a theoretical position and conversely the unexamined theoretical assumptions behind uncritically accepted practice. When Audrey said "What do you think about this? (whatever this may be), I knew that if I didn't think now I had better do so soon and my reasons had better be good. It is no bad thing to be thus challenged. It has left me very aware of the sloppiness that is often passed off as considered opinion. There was no sloppiness in this project. Intellectual rigour was the order of the day.

As I look back on it, several issues become apparent:

Trust:

This lies at the heart of any literacy project; students have to trust their tutors that it is safe to take risks; tutors need to trust their co-ordinator when she says new methods are better than old. In the case of research the whole program needs to trust the researcher, for without that trust nothing of real worth can be achieved. One of the ramifications of this is that all those in these relationships of trust have to be trustworthy.

Vulnerability:

I was involved in the concept of the research finally published as "Opportunity to do Brilliantly" but even so felt extremely vulnerable. It is one thing to want to find out more about what is going on within a program and another to be dissected and probed and exposed to the world in all one's nakedness. There is also the matter of being frozen in time. I no longer think many of the things I thought in 1984 – and would express differently many other things though my values are still the same. Reading again what I wrote then is not unlike looking at old photographs, mixed pleasure and pain.

Learning Experience:

The process of the research was a rich learning experience for all who were involved – students, tutors and co-ordinator. All of us found ourselves thinking about issues in a new light; asking things we had never asked before. For many tutors, it was the first time they had reflected on their practice and while the response did not [illegible] in the meeting, as we had hoped, b[illegible]ing later weeks, it was a significant [illegible] in their on-going

development.

I was ashamed one day when Audrey asked me how I managed my professional reading and I had to admit I did very little. To do myself justice, it was not for want of trying. I found is extremely difficult to find anything to read. As a partially-paid part-time worker I did not have spare cash to buy books or journals. Municipal libraries have small holdings of relevant texts and I had no access to institutional libraries. Even so it was not good enough.

Audrey responded positively and frequently sent me readings and papers she had prepared for her graduate students. This matter of professional reading for tutors is still unsatisfactory and needs attention.

I found the involvement in this research a generally valuable educational experience. It was good to have my assumptions challenged, to have to give an answer for why I was doing things the way I was or, if not an answer, to demonstrate the framework within which I was operating.

Having written this, I looked to see what I wrote at the time. My comments are substantially the same with some interesting variants. Then, I used the word gruelling. Time dulls pain; one remembers that one's tooth ached but the quality of the pain fades. Demanding is perhaps the word I would use now, challenging.

There were moments when desertion was an option to be trifled with. I can remember stomping around muttering a Spike Milligan poem:

"Said the general of the army
I think this war is barmy.
So he threw away his gun
Now he's having much more fun."

For Beverley, the interviewing process was both humbling and cathartic. She was very aware of the trust students were placing in her as they shared their lives with her. That information was of great benefit in understanding their learning needs and in planning future programs for them.

The regular meetings of the research team were a time for exploring the theoretical basis on which practice was based, for refining ideas and grappling with awkward questions. For Beverley also the research has proved to be of lasting benefit.

Barbara Leahy's reflections on her research involvement concern her own learning from the experience. She speaks of it giving her a different view of living ... 'I don't look at things in the same way'. It has been a profound learning experience that brings life change of this magnitude. As a tutor and tutor educator Barbara has built on these insights and gone from strength to strength.

Participatory Research is, like marriage, not something to be entered into 'lightly, wantonly or inadvisedly'. However, if you are strong enough to face into a bracing wind; if you want to uncover your assumptions and evaluate your practice; if you want to learn as an individual and as a member of a group; then find a researcher you can trust and head for the open sea.

WILL NATIONAL CORE CURRICULUM COURSES PRODUCE APPRENTICES WHO CANNOT READ?

CATHERINE HOPE

In 1985, for the first time, several Tasmanian apprenticeship courses began to move from the traditional teaching model of four subjects a year, chalk-and-talk delivery to modularized, and semi self-paced styles of teaching. It soon became clear that many of the methods traditionally used by Tasmanian TAFE Colleges to assist apprentices with limited reading or study skills were no longer appropriate for apprentices in these courses.

In 1987 research was undertaken at Hobart Technical College in an attempt to discover the effects of these courses on apprentices with low reading skills. As a result of this research, some interesting information was uncovered and a whole new series of questions and problems were raised.

In this paper I will briefly outline the altered style of the new courses and the results of the research undertaken. I will discuss some of the implications of this research and, finally, I will suggest some teaching strategies which might be used by teachers hoping to develop the technical reading skills of their apprentices.

THE NEW COURSES

Hobart Technical College has a student population of over 8000 students and runs over 160 part-time and full-time courses. These courses include prevocational courses, 25 apprenticeship courses, general certificate courses and paraprofessional courses to Associate Diploma level.

In 1979 a full-time compensatory education co-ordinator was employed and funding began to be provided for a college compensatory education programme to be run. Features of this programme include:

1. Diagnostic Testing

Most apprentices and prevocational students and many certificate students are tested at the commencement of their courses with trade-specific cloze reading tests and the Tasmanian T.A.F.E. Diagnostic Mathematics Test. Students shown to be potentially at risk of failing their courses are usually given more intensive assistance either from their subject teacher or from compensatory tutors.

2. Tutoring

This usually takes the form of after-hours, individual or small-group classes specifically designed to assist students to cope with the Maths, English or Study Skills requirements of the subjects they need help in. Classes can be timetabled or can operate on a drop-in basis.

3. Staff Development

Increasing efforts are being devoted towards giving subject teachers the skills and support needed to assist 'at risk' students within the context of the classroom or trade workshop.

Until 1985, the compensatory education programme had a clearly defined role in its work with trade apprentices and the success rate of intervention classes was high. From 1985, many trade apprenticeship courses began adopting National Core Curricula. Some of the trades adopting National Core Curricula maintained their traditional methods of teaching. Others (in particular, Automotive Mechanics, Fitting and Machining and Metal Fabrication) adopted new instruction techniques along with the new curricula.

The instruction techniques adopted by these thr[illegible]departments were vastly

different from each other, yet they seemed to have certain distinctive features in common:

1. All were, to varying extents, based upon the Instructional Systems Model of curriculum design.

2. Calculations, Theory and Practical material were integrated into the programme rather than being taught in separate subjects.

3. The courses had been modularized, the modules being arranged so that apprentices undertook a progressive set of mastery tests as they progressed through the course.

4. Apprentices' work was marked as satisfactory or non-satisfactory instead of in terms of a percentage score.

5. There was a reduced emphasis on teacher input and an increased input from module booklets and other printed material. To varying extents these courses were tending towards becoming self-paced.

Another immediately observable feature of these courses was the fact that apprentices were no longer failing. Technically speaking, despite the indications of the diagnostic reading tests, there was now no such thing as an 'at risk' apprentice in these courses.

As far as the Compensatory Education Programme was concerned, this raised a series of questions, some of which are appropriate to this paper.

1. What factors are contributing to this new 'success' rate of apprentices.

2. Are the current cloze reading tests testing for skills and concepts required in the new courses?

3. What happens to apprentices with limited reading skills?

4. How would the total self-pacing of these courses affect apprentices with limited reading skills?

It was decided that the following research techniques would help determine the answers to these questions:

1. A study of the 'Fry' Readability of the cloze tests used in each Department and of the new curriculum materials. This would show whether the cloze tests still tested for the ability to read material written at the standard and in the style of the material in the new courses.

2. A study of the end of module test results of apprentices. These results could be compared with apprentices' results on the cloze reading tests to see whether there was any correlation between their performances in their courses and their performances on the reading tests.

RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

Cloze Tests vs Readability

The Automotive Cloze Test had a similar readability to that of the materials used in the new curriculum. The Metal Trades Cloze Test had a similar readability to that of materials used in the Fitting and Machining course, but a higher readability than most of the materials used in the Metal Fabrication course. This meant that the Automotive Cloze Test should still be a useful indicator of those Automotive apprentices who might have reading problems. The Metal Trades Cloze Test should also indicate those Fitting and Machining apprentices who might have reading problems, but would be less likely to clearly indicate Metal Fabrication apprentices with reading problems.

Cloze Tests vs Apprentices' Performances

There was only a small correlation between Automotive apprentices' performances on end of module tests and performances on the Automotive Cloze Test.

In Fitting and Machining there was a negligible correlation between apprentices' performances on end of module tests and their results on the Cloze Test.

No useful figures were available for the

Metal Fabrication Tests.

It also appeared however, that in all three trades, regardless of apprentices' entry skills in reading, all apprentices were satisfactorily completing their year's work within the required time.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Under the "old system" apprentices with poor technical reading comprehension almost invariably failed in Theory unless they received compensatory tutoring. With the new modularized system, such apprentices no longer seemed to do poorly.

This paper suggests that, in each of the three trade courses being considered, some or all of the following factors have contributed to this new 'success' rate.

1. Appropriate Assessments

Under the previous system, apprentice learning of trade material was tested in separate mid-year and annual examinations in Theory, Calculations, Drawing (or Workshop Theory) and Practice. Much of the material tested in Theory exams concerned practical tasks and hence, would have been more appropriately tested in a practical situation.

Each year, many of the apprentices receiving compensatory help actually knew and understood the theory material taught and if tested orally in a practical situation would have been able to demonstrate their knowledge, yet they always seemed to fail their theory exams. Failure in these cases could have been due to many reasons:

(i) extremely poor reading and writing skills;
(ii) examination nerves;
(iii) inability to express themselves in the form and length required by examination questions; and,
(iv) poorly written examination questions.

The new modularized style of course provides far more appropriate testing in the following ways:

(i) Knowledge of material related to practical tasks is tested practically.
(ii) Pen and paper tests are short, with as many diagrams and as few words as possible. Questions are multiple-choice or require answers with a maximum length of one sentence.

Hence, apprentices who know and understand the course content have more opportunity to effectively demonstrate this, than they had with the previous style of course.

2. Tests on Small Packages of Work

Another factor contributing to apprentices' failure rate in the old course theory exams was their inability to develop effective memorization and recall technique.

Designers of the new curricula believed that their courses should reflect as accurately as possible conditions apprentices are likely to encounter in their working lives. They saw, then, that being able to recall large slabs of material without reference to any tables or manuals is a skill which is of little use in the workplace. With the new curricula, tests are small and frequent. Factual recall is still required but the body of material which must be memorized is so small, that memory feats are no longer necessary.

3. Courses designed to help those with low academic skills to perform well

The factors listed above would assist apprentices with low academic skills to perform better on the theory components of their courses than they would have with the old courses.

The style of presentation of the written material (lots of illustrations, clear layout) would also help poor readers to read with more understanding.

On the other hand, the new courses rely very heavily on the printed word as a teaching medium. This heavy reliance on print and the minimal use of what used to be the key teaching method in the old courses, conversation and demonstration

(chalk and talk), would militate against apprentices with poor reading skills.

4. Testing for Factual Recall Only

A feature of the new courses is that, where possible, understanding of theoretical material is tested by apprentice performance on practical tasks. It is questionable, however, whether all theory can be adequately tested in this way, and the short answer format of the theory tests seems to check for factual recall only. There seems to be little scope for testing understanding of theoretical content of the course and the ability to use theoretical knowledge to solve work problems.

5. Multiple Choice Format Encourages Guessing

Some teachers teaching the new courses have expressed the view that many apprentices attain satisfactory results on multiple-choice tests through guess-work. Many of the distractors, these teachers point out, are poorly designed and make it possible to select the correct answers without knowing the required material.

It has also been pointed out that when apprentices perform unsatisfactorily and are required to re-learn and re-sit the paper, it is even easier to select the correct answer. Apprentices might be working the system without learning the material the courses are designed to teach.

In summary, the following aspects of the new courses would assist apprentices with poor reading skills to perform better in the course tests:

(i) more appropriate, brief and frequent testing;
(ii) the improved layout of printed material;
(iii) the greater emphasis on the practical aspects of the new courses.

It may be, however, that poor readers are also doing better in their tests because they are able to guess the correct answers or because they are merely required to parrot back answers without demonstrating understanding of the material taught.

TEACHING APPRENTICES TO READ

An issue of even greater significance than those already listed, however, is the concern that there seems to be no provision in the new courses for assisting apprentices to become better readers. Hence, apprentices with poor reading skills are being allowed to complete their apprenticeships with papers attesting to their competence and yet might still be unable to read technical material with understanding.

It could be argued that apprentices' reading was not assisted in the old style of courses either, and, in the case of many trades, this is probably true. The old style of teaching did, however, have inherent in its structure, crucial elements which could be utilised to enhance apprentices' reading skills if trade teachers wished to do so. These crucial elements were the oral content of the courses and the opportunity for teachers to introduce exercises and worksheets designed to build up apprentices' language skills at the same time as they built up trade knowledge.

Much has been written about the relationship between language and learning as well as the necessity for people to be comfortable with new language before they are able to read technical material with understanding. Robert Mealyea writes in his paper **Language Development, The Role of the Workshop Teacher:**

"Since most learning is embedded in language, students must be allowed to 'language' at all stages of learning to make meaning out of knowledge by bringing their past experiences to the problem" (P. 11)

and again

"It seems that for effective learning to occur, those taking part will depend upon their being able to come to terms with both the subject matter and the language that the situation or context demands" (P. 5)

Under the former system teachers

concerned to build "languaging" into their classes could do so through:

(i) encouraging discussion and apprentices' sharing of experiences;
(ii) making the information gaining process experiential rather than didactic;
(iii) stressing problem solving and questioning rather than just acquisition of facts; and,
(iv) encouraging apprentices to write reports and take notes in their own words.

The substitution of much of this teaching process by individualized instruction via printed booklets, and the replacement of the many opportunities for teacher controlled learning by the formalization of modules, have greatly reduced the opportunities teachers might have had to improve the technical reading skills of their apprentices, and in so doing, to enhance the quality of the learning experiences in which the apprentices are participating.

The main innovation which could greatly assist apprentices' trade language development, the increased practical orientation of the new courses, has been rendered more ineffective as a language teaching medium by the individualized nature of the instruction, i.e. the 'language' has been removed from the task.

The fact that apprentices will continue to leave their courses no better at reading technical material than they were when they commenced training has several serious implications:

1. Tradespeople with poor reading skills will have great difficulty in reading operation manuals, specification lists and other technical material crucial to the proficient operation of their trade. In many trades the lack of these skills could mean the difference between remaining a subordinate and becoming a leading hand or supervisor. In the case of Automotive Mechanics, inability to read technical manuals has more serious ramifications. A mechanic who cannot consult current manuals on the many varieties of cars and their parts will be a mechanic who will be either soon out of work or will be a dangerously inefficient operator.

The automobile industry is one of the most dramatically changing industries of our time. It is highly probable that the kind of engines current apprentices are training with now will be totally obsolete in the very near future. Mechanics who cannot find and access information (libraries, computers) and inform themselves on the operation and repair techniques for the kinds of cars they will be working with in the future will be mechanics rendered as obsolete as the cars that they trained on.

2. The 1987 document "Skills for Australia" is one of the most recent of countless employment and training reports and documents stressing the need for increasing flexibility in the workforce.

The nature and shape of industry is changing at an accelerating rate and if Australia is to compete in the world market Australian industry needs to be able to embrace and influence change. This means that trade training needs to aim towards encouraging the development of skills enabling trainees to be :

- adaptable and flexible
- occupationally and geographically mobile
- "able to benefit from the provision of increased options in recurrent vocational education and personal development." (Tasmanian T.A.F.E. Triennium Submission Summary, 1987).

If tradespeople are to be skilled, flexible and mobile enough to respond to the rapidly changing nature of trade work, an essential requirement will be the ability to read technical material. Without technical reading skills, they will find it extremely difficult to move beyond traditional trade boundaries and participate in the process of retraining which will be a feature of trade work in the future.

FURTHER ISSUES

So far, the concerns raised in this paper have dealt with apprentices' development of technical reading skills. When one

examines the language and reading content of the new courses, several other issues emerge.

These issues are central to a debate current within T.A.F.E. curriculum circles, a debate which could be summed up as the 'Vocational Education' versus 'Training' debate.

Proponents of the 'Training' side of the debate insist that T.A.F.E.'s duty is the training of apprentices for their jobs. Systems models of curriculum design are ideal for designing training programmes. Locke (1981) writes of the Systems model:

> It is a blend of Skinnerian learning theory and empirical methods of analysis, design, development, and evaluation of education and training. It rejects the teacher centered delivery strategy with its clumsy evaluation methods which ignore Behavioural learning theory developments. (P. 6)

Those on the 'Vocational Education' side of the debate express concern at the narrowness of the 'Training' view. As they point out, "Desirable broader educational and vocational aims are left behind in a crude attempt to fit workers into specific slots in particular industries" (Mealyea, 1984, P. 132).

If one views the aim of T.A.F.E.'s involvement with apprentices as being Vocational Education rather than Training then the new curricula have been designed in such a way that it would be very difficult to encourage the development of four major aspects of education:

1. Interpersonal Skills

The new modularized style of course while probably being highly efficient at training apprentices, does not encourage co-operative learning.

Thompson (1985) cites strong evidence that:

> co-operation produces higher achievement and productivity than either competition (under conventional teaching) or individualistic efforts (under individualized and self-paced instruction) ..... Co-operative learning fosters higher student achievement and has the potential to develop interpersonal skills necessary for vocational graduates. (P vii)

Given that all graduate apprentices will be required to work co-operatively with others for a significant proportion of their working lives, it seems that it would be more educationally sound for T.A.F.E. to assist apprentices to develop greater interpersonal skills as well as technical skills.

2. Creativity

This issue concerns encouraging apprentices to look beyond traditional methods of solving traditional problems in their trade and to consider novel means of approaching them. It concerns assisting apprentices to look beyond 'what is' and to consider what could be possible.

Encouraging creativity also means assisting apprentices to cope with a rapidly changing future.

Stevenson (1982) writes that creativity fosters the acquisition of the skills of adaptability and flexibility and that creativity is a skill which can be learned. The new modularized courses do not seem to encourage curiosity and active problem solving, and hence do not facilitate the acquisition of creativity (P. 23).

3. Aesthetics

This issue concerns encouraging apprentices in the pursuit of excellence. It concerns assisting apprentices to appreciate the difference between a machine or tool or object which performs as it should, and one which both performs well and has a finish and beauty of line which gives it appeal.

There is rarely room in an apprentice's on-the-job training for the encouragement of aesthetics in the trade. If it is not encouraged by T.A.F.E. it will probably be encouraged nowhere.

4. Industrial Ethics

As with the issues of creativity and aesthetics, if T.A.F.E. does not assist apprentices to consider issues of industrial ethics, then it is likely that no-one will.

It is probable that at some stage of their working lives most tradespeople will be required to make decisions which could involve moral dilemmas (e.g. what do I do if the boss tells me to cost cut and produce shoddy work?). How these tradespeople will resolve these dilemmas could depend on whether some of these issues and the conflicting value systems involved were discussed frankly during their training.

The document "Skills for Australia" stresses that Australia's future prosperity depends upon its workforce developing skills in "life-time learning, enterprise and initiative, pursuit of excellence, communication skills, teamwork and responsibility" (1987, P. 8).

The ability of Australian trades people to work creatively, co-operatively and ethically in the pursuit of excellence is an issue which will affect all members of the community, both as potential consumers of the work of these tradespeople and as members of a nation whose products and reputation are under scrutiny in an international market.

Yet, despite the obvious necessity for encouraging these skills, the new T.A.F.E. courses have become more trade-specific, more individualistic and more intent on teaching and testing only narrow, easily observed skills.

DEVELOPING APPRENTICES' READING SKILLS

In this final part of the paper I wish to outline strategies which might be employed by teachers of the new courses to build up apprentices' technical reading skills.

By "reading" I mean the ability to grasp the meaning of material being "read".

In order to comprehend or discover the meaning of material being "read" one needs to understand the style of language or jargon which is being used. That is, one needs Prior Knowledge of the topic.

Technical prose differs from the prose of fiction, newspapers and other material apprentices are likely to have encountered.

The new modularized courses, have, to varying degrees, increased the likelihood of apprentices' comprehension of course material by:

(a) simplifying the language used and reducing continuous prose to notes in point form;
(b) copious use of diagrams;
(c) use of larger print, headings and generally attractive presentation.

There is no doubt that these techniques would make these materials easier to read than the texts apprentices were previously subjected to, and such techniques would partially compensate for the handicap poor readers experience with the over-reliance of the new courses on the printed word.

However, the key issue raised earlier in this paper that regardless of course performance, apprentices with low technical reading skills continue to be poor readers of technical prose – rears its ugly head. No matter how comprehensible (or manageable) module materials might be, apprentices are not being given the skills to enable them to tackle the technical prose of the real world.

Strategies for improving apprentices' technical reading skills will be discussed under two categories: those which develop the all-important Prior Knowledge and those which develop apprentices' confidence and competence in reading and writing technical material.

Developing Prior Knowledge

There are two main strategies which can be used to develop apprentices' prior knowledge of technical material:

(a) provision of practical experience, and
(b) group discussion.

(a) T.A.F.E.'s National Centre for Research and Development's **Reading to Learn in Trade Education** project recommends that teachers always:

> set the scene before reading with the aid of on-site excursions, films, slides, listening to and watching a practising tradesperson or using working models. That is, teach the topic before your students read about it (Beasley, 1983, P. 8)

To varying extents in the different trades, the new modularized style of teaching reverses this process, letting apprentices tackle reading material "cold".

(b) Language is a powerful medium for building prior knowledge and encouraging learning. The more teachers encourage discussion of trade material by their apprentices, the more they are assisting apprentices to build a bridge from what they already know to what is new to them. This discussion could be in the form of teachers talking about their own trade experiences; encouraging apprentices to discuss with each other the results of experiments and practical tasks, encouraging apprentices to discuss their own trade experiences and to question each other; assisting apprentices to form hypotheses as a result of their observations and to test these hypotheses.

Again, the individualized instruction nature of the new courses drastically reduces opportunities for teacher-apprentice dialogue and for apprentice-apprentice discussion.

Encouraging Reading and Writing Skills

Skimming

Poor readers can often be characterised by a tendency to "peck away" at print, plowing through material, laboriously deciphering every word. Good readers, on the other hand, are more likely to skim through material, selecting the important points from the more peripheral for more careful perusal at a later stage.

Trade teachers can help poor readers to develop skimming skills by introducing them to their texts/module booklets, showing them the use of textual clues such as headings, subheadings, chapter summaries, indexes, light and dark print. They can also point out the function of link words (such as "but" and "however", "because" and "therefore", "then" and "finally") which signal comparison and contrast, cause and effect, and teach them to skim for these words to gain an overall feel of the topic (Mealyea, 1984, P. 4).

Vocabulary

All trades have their own unique vocabulary comprising often highly complex technical words and jargon words (everyday words which have been assigned a different meaning by the trade, e.g. fat sand, metal fatigue, stud walls). This vocabulary can be quite baffling to the uninitiated. Text writers often unwittingly include these words, without explanation, in their otherwise simple texts, simply because familiarity with their trade has blinded them to the difficulty such words can present. Trade teachers can help apprentices by taking time to introduce this new vocabulary to them, explaining the derivation of complex words (e.g. duct – conduct – conduction – conductor) and the specialized meanings of jargon words. By teachers doing this, apprentices are assisted not only to understand the specific words being introduced, but also to develop skills in deciphering new words they might encounter at later stages in their working and reading lives.

Writing

Mealyea writes that "putting new ideas into words forces learners to think their way towards understanding"(Mealyea, 1984, P. 11).

This thinking towards understanding can be promoted not only through group discussion but by encouraging apprentices to write about their findings in their own words. This writing could take the form of

formalized technical reports or more informal expressive writing. By writing about what they discover, apprentices will both grasp new concepts more effectively and also begin to demystify the processes of technical reading and writing.

In summary, then, trade teachers can assist apprentices to develop reading and writing skills through:

1. developing prior knowledge through provision of practical experiences and encouraging group discussion,

2. assisting apprentices to develop skimming techniques,

3. explaining the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary, and

4. encouraging apprentices to describe their findings in their own words – both in spoken and written form.

All of these strategies are dependent upon the trade teacher using discussion as a teaching tool and providing practical experiences on which apprentices can base new learning. The increasing emphasis given to self-pacing and individualized instruction militates against the use of these strategies in teaching.

There would be many difficulties associated with the process of incorporating these language-building strategies into the new style of course. These difficulties, however, can only appear minor when one considers the implications of not implementing such strategies.

Students not assisted to become good readers of technical material will be unable to access information necessary for efficient performance of their trade and will be barred from any future involvement in the processes of upskilling and retraining so necessary in the rapidly changing world of work. T.A.F.E. Colleges persistently producing graduates who cannot read technical material will be seen as Colleges whose courses are of limited quality and credibility and are out of touch with the demands of today's workplace.

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LIBRARIES AND LITERACY
- PROBLEMS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICES - QUEENSLAND

JOANNA REID

Public Libraries Branch of the State Library of Queensland has provided an Adult Literacy service to Queensland public libraries for almost ten years. The role of the service, and indeed Public Libraries Branch as a whole, is to provide consultative and resource services to librarians and libraries in Queensland. The resources provided by the Adult Literacy service include fiction and non-fiction graded readers, (for adults), workbooks for use by tutors and students, reference books and audio-visual materials. The consultative aim of the service attempts to provide librarians with any information, contacts and ideas including information about existing services and about providing services.

As with any service, the Adult Literacy service provided by PLB cannot operate without promotion. It is this aspect of the service that I will concentrate on here today – not in terms of how to, but rather, the constraints which hinder the development of Adult Literacy services in public libraries in Queensland.

Yesterday, Val spoke of an attitude of, "That's not part of a public librarian's role!". This attitude extends, I believe, to the perception of the library as an appropriate vehicle for approaching the everyday needs of people with low literacy levels. Too often the needs of this group are lumped together in the teaching bag with little or no recognition of the everyday information and recreational needs provided, as a matter of course, for "literate" members of the community.

In my liaison with non-library service providers, I find that they, too, do not look to public libraries to fill some of the needs of this group e.g. to support new or nearly independent readers.

It should be noted that this is not always the case. There are public libraries in Queensland which provide extensive services to people of varying literacy levels. These services are well used by non-library groups and organizations in the Adult Literacy area.

However, in many of the libraries I come into contact with, there are very real constraints which hinder the development of services and as a consequence do not display the library as a place able to support the endeavours of students and tutors.

The constraints of which I am speaking include: the pressures of limited time, geographical and professional isolation, financial constraints and a lack of awareness of the needs of adults with low literacy levels.

At a training course for librarians in our Country Lending Scheme held recently, one of the librarians stopped me to say – "Joanna, this is all very well – but when are we going to get the time?".

Most of the libraries of our Country Lending Scheme, (some 100 in total), exist in very small communities. The libraries are usually staffed on a part-time basis, some are open as little as 12 hours per week. Few of these librarians are paid to work outside opening hours and often the librarian is the only member of staff. This means that any work outside the library building will have to be done out of hours. It also means that little is able to be done in the library – when are they going to get the time?

These librarians need easy and quick ways of achieving results. They need information on how to structure and plan a service, what works and what doesn't work. There is a need for dissemination of practical information about the provision

of literacy services in library literature. As Geoff said yesterday, how often do we see mention of literacy in our library journals and newsletters.

This sort of information exchange is particularly important for librarians away from the South-East corner of the State. It is very difficult and costly for librarians to attend conferences, seminars and meetings, such as this one. As I mentioned before, many librarians work in isolation. They are the only member of staff and might not see or talk to another librarian for months. They are geographically and professionally isolated. They do not have access to the support and stimulation offered by contact with other librarians, nor to the ideas and wealth of information provided by conferences and so forth.

When I visit these libraries I always encourage them to contact each other and Public Libraries Branch to discuss problems and ideas. I also encourage librarians to contact organizations providing literacy services in their local area. Liaison with other literacy organizations can open a wealth of information to the inquiring librarian e.g. how do I reach this group of people, what library services do they need, what resources do they need?

Similarly, speaking to other librarians who are providing services and/or resources, encourages the sharing of ideas, knowledge, what works and what doesn't work. Librarians are welcome to contact me for any information regarding Adult Literacy and Adult Literacy services. If I don't know, I certainly put them in contact with someone who does.

It is very important that libraries offering an Adult Literacy service be aware of the problems encountered by the target group. This means going beyond identifying resources to looking at staff training, how borrowers will access the collection, where will the collection be housed, reader education for tutors.

The assumptions that are made in our everyday work also need to be looked at e.g. the assumption that the library community is a homogenous group of independent readers. The library community includes people of varied literacy levels, people who can't read print, people who don't want to read print, people who do/don't want to read English.

So the need to promote adult literacy concerns extends to the librarians themselves and challenging what they perceive to be their role.

This promotion also needs to be extended to the way Local Council Authorities perceive the role of the library.

Public Libraries in Queensland are funded largely or wholly by Local Councils. For most Councils, libraries are a low priority and so called Specialist library services such as "Adult Literacy", not infrequently are ignored altogether. After all, "Doesn't TAFE do that?". Local Council financial control of libraries affects the hours of paid work, (during and outside opening hours), opportunities for continuing education (i.e. seminars, training courses etc.) and for many - materials purchased (books, cassettes, videos, etc.) The percentage of the budget allocated to the library is in part, at least, determined by their perception of the role of the library in the community. To extend the budget to include services such as Adult Literacy, Councils need to be convinced that the provision of such a service is normal and basic to public library services in general. That Adult Literacy services are indeed basic to the role played by the library is supported by the LAA Libraries and Literacy Statement:

> The traditional functions of librarians include the collection, organisation, promotion and dissemination of printed and audio-visual communications media. The exercise of these functions implies concern for those who lack the skills necessary to make appropriate use of communications resources.

The constraints which affect the development of Adult Literacy services in public libraries are not insurmountable. There are many ways of overcoming difficulties and dissolving problems. One of the things that I am hoping will come out

of this conference is the formation of a libraries and literacy group to promote Adult Literacy services in Queensland libraries.

What is urgently required is awareness.

Awareness of the needs of people with low literacy skills in the library community and awareness of the role that libraries can play in helping to fill these needs.

Let's put literacy back onto the library agenda!

COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR HEARING IMPAIRED YOUNG ADULTS

TRISHA CALVER

Twenty-seven hearing impaired young adults have sought assistance from the Gold Coast Rehabilitation Unit in the last twelve months. Of these, approximately one-third use sign language and the rest communicate with speech. Most have hearing losses in the severe to profound range.

The role of the Speech Therapist in conjunction with other team members is to assist these young people to

(1) gain or retain employment;
(2) seek further training;
(3) live independently.

To achieve these goals, they must have effective communication skills – both oral and written.

All of these clients have significant language and literacy problems with language and literacy ages of between six and twelve years.

The most obvious language problems are limited vocabulary and knowledge of syntactic structures. This lack of a substantial language base is a major reason for the difficulties with written language i.e. if they do not know that the word exists they will not recognise it in its written form.

The second major problem deals with the use of language, both oral and written, in different contexts. All communication is rule based with different rules applying to written as opposed to oral language and formal contexts (work) as opposed to informal contexts (play). The spoken, signed and written language of these young hearing impaired adults is direct, informal, concrete and 'impolite'. It often does not conform to the accepted rules for oral or written language usage. Because of this it can be perceived by workmates, teachers and supervisors to be rude and abrupt.

The Social Communication Skills Program developed at the Gold Coast Rehabilitation Unit seeks to remediate this second problem. The formal communication rules of the workplace or college were explained through the use of role plays and discussions in a group setting.

Such a program has implications for the teaching of literacy – particularly written expression – to hearing impaired adults, as written language for work and study is required to be formal, polite and indirect.

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